

THESE ANIMALS OF OURS

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By
REV. ALOYSIUS ROCHE

Restaurare omnia in Christo
To restore *all* things in Christ.
(Pope Pius X.)

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P R E F A C E

TO publish a book of this sort without a preface and a dedication would be equivalent to sending a delicate child out into the storm with neither a raincoat nor an umbrella. To some extent prefaces and dedications are sound investments against the contingency of the inclement weather that one almost expects to encounter when one makes even a tentative excursion into the agitated territory of humanitarianism. Dealing *ex professo* with the Animal Question, the book incidentally examines certain familiar problems of adjustment—amongst others the Christian attitude to modern science and to modern ‘improving’ movements generally, and the more intimate problem of our emotions and sentimental urges and reactions.

Some say that the whole thing is a matter of temperament, that either you are inclined to worry about the animals or you are not, and that the worried and the unworried had better go their separate ways and leave one another alone. Others insist that we are like books—some of us being written in poetry and some in prose ; and since in a realist and ruthless world like ours there is no room for the sheer romanticism of a man like St. Francis, the ‘practical’ people are entitled to the last word.

Yet, at no period of history have human beings been without misgivings regarding their casual treatment of the brute creation ; and where there are misgivings there is always some sense of responsibility, even though it has never been easy to determine just exactly what this responsibility entails in the shape of the lawful and the unlawful. Historical man has had, in this matter, the guidance of cultivated reason and of revelation. Even when he was left to himself, he has felt the pressure of the problem and has not been able to resign himself to his own irresponsibility. And from the first drawing aside of the veil, we find God manifesting His will regarding those dumb creatures who cannot reason with us, cannot appeal to us save through the medium of their looks. Almost alone amongst sacred writings the Bible concerns itself with the Animal Problem, sanctioning this and forbidding that, and giving us vivid glimpses of a Divine Solitude which feels for the hungry ravens and for the untimely death of a sparrow. Moreover, this same God of compassion willed on one occasion to give human speech to a dumb beast, and not without significance the burden of its utterance was this : ‘ Why strikest thou me ? ’

And the Christian dispensation contains a revelation of its own—a unique revelation of fellowship, understanding and sympathy manifested by the lives and legends of countless holy men and culminating in the startling example of the Poor Man of Assisi. Whilst we need not exalt these examples into a rule, we dare not dismiss them as mere aberrations of the mind. The moral underlying them would seem to be that man’s attitude to the brutes is

elevated or degraded in strict accordance with the clearness or dimness of his spiritual vision, in strict accordance with the strength or feebleness of his spiritual capacity.

As for the 'impossible idealism' of the Poor Man of Assisi, in the foreword to a booklet on Kindness to Animals published by the Catholic Truth Society, Father Keating, S.J., does not hesitate to say that if his Church were asked how she would have her children treat the lower sentient creation, she would always point to the example of St. Francis.

Meanwhile the problem remains with us and no amount of mere philosophising has been able to solve it. We can but examine it again and again—not perhaps without bias but, at any rate, without bad temper—in an attempt to do justice to those who really wish to have Christian views on the subject. The examination may not carry us beyond the rather vague conclusion that any abuse of the power we have over the lower animals is unworthy of the follower of Christ ; and if it be objected that this has been insisted upon before, we can only answer with Cicero that that cannot be said too often which is not yet understood.

Having, therefore, well and truly prefaced his venture, the explorer takes the liberty of dedicating it to the people next door who kindly allow their cat to have afternoon tea with his cat.

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WHEN we say that the lower animals belong to us, we have to guard against the implication that they belong neither to God nor to themselves and, therefore, are entitled only to that amount of life and happiness which we condescend to allow them. When we say that they were created for our use, we must clearly understand the significance of the word 'use.' Some think that an animal is useless just because it cannot be eaten or exploited or commercialised or appropriated in some way to man's convenience. 'God made the lamb to go with the mint sauce and the bird's plumage to go with the society lady's hat'—this is about all that the word 'use' conveys to certain minds. 'But it isn't *advertising* anything!' grumbled the commercially minded gentleman viewing a certain volcano for the first time and having his business sense outraged by so obvious a waste of good smoke and flames.

'And what do you think they were made for?' Ruskin asks. 'All these spotty, finned and winged and clawed things that grope between you and the dust, that flit between you and the sky? The flocks that are your wealth, the moth that frets it away? The herds upon a thousand hills, the locusts, the worm? The creatures that serve you and love you



(or would if they might) and obey? The joys of the callow nests and burrowed homes of Earth? What is the meaning to you of all these—what is their worth to you? No worth, you answer perhaps: or, the contrary, of worth. In fact, you mean to put an end to all that. You will keep pigeons to shoot, geese to make pies of, cocks for fighting, horses to bet on, sheep for wool and cows for cheese. As to the rest of creatures, you owe no thanks to Noah and would fain, if you could, order a special deluge for their benefit. Failing that, you will, at all events, get rid of the useless feeders as fast as possible.’

But it is surely impossible to deny that the brutes have an æsthetic value, that their mere presence on the earth enhances the beauty and wonder of the earth? And no Christian will want to deny that in their own way they are glorifying God simply by being. Millions of animals are beyond the reach of human exploitation—are even beyond the reach of human eye-sight.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear :
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

But, it may be that nothing in creation is either useless or wasted. At any rate, the sweetness and blush of the hidden flower are fully appreciated by the divine eyes. If the brutes were to be ‘utilised’ out of existence, we should be all the poorer and more lonely for their loss. It is this that makes their wanton exploitation so abhorrent. Few will deny their companionship value; and this

aspect of the animal creation has been dignified and, to some extent, consecrated by the example of a host of great saints. As far as we can gather, this was God's original intention in creating them.

Granted that the original intention of God has miscarried, and granted that original sin has made 'all the difference,' yet we cannot claim a *patria potestas* over them in the ancient sense. They are not ours to do what we like with. All human dominion is restricted ; whether over a wife, a family, or what is loosely called 'private' property. Man is not a Paramount Chief in any respect. There is only one Paramount Chief and He exercises His paramountcy by doing good. Many of our misfortunes, social and other, arise from man's misconception of his own powers. St. John Chrysostom reminds us that the words 'mine' and 'thine' are words devoid of reality. 'God,' he says, 'has given man no more than a very precarious right of possession ; and in comparison with God's right, man's right is no more than a right to *use*.' And even this right to use is limited in various ways.

Man is allowed to use the things God gives him only to the extent and in the way conceded by the Owner. He may not go beyond the limits stipulated by the Owner. In giving these animals to us God has not renounced His own rights over them or interest in them. Our dominion over them is a *delegated* providence and we must act towards them in accordance with the example of the *divine* providence. But divine providence cares for every single animal, the smallest as well as the biggest. Not one of them escapes its solicitude—not even the sparrow that is

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sold for a copper. Man is bound to exercise his dominion over them in the same way, in conformity to the divine model. This fatherly solicitude of God for the brutes is not a matter of mere conjecture. In the Old Testament we have about a dozen texts which make it plain that God is seriously concerned for their welfare, and equally seriously concerned for the way in which we treat them.

It is easy to talk about power, but it is easier still to forget that nothing on earth is more liable to abuse. It is only in God Himself that the opposition between power and goodness is completely overcome : but the creature must strive to be like God in this respect. Each creature is a rung of the ladder by means of which man mounts up to God. That is the real object of the dominion we have over the brutes. As St. Bernard says : ‘ Each creature is at man’s service to lead him to God’s service.’ The Psalmist praises the Almighty because He has subjected all things under man’s feet—sheep and oxen and the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea ; but they are subjected to man in order that he may use them to elevate and not degrade himself.

We must take our stand in front of these animals of ours not in an attitude of masterfulness and domination, but first and foremost in an attitude of respect and understanding. We must try to decipher in them the signature of the Creator. We must approach them with the reverence of St. Francis who looked at them with attention, with patience, with sympathy—in short with the eyes of a brother. The Church, by setting the seal of her approval upon his life, surely implies that his behaviour to the

lower animals is part and parcel of *The Franciscan Message to the World*.

Some have maintained that man may treat the brutes as he treats the vegetation and the minerals ; but it is obvious that there is a certain order in the use of different things. We may not treat the animals as so much fuel. They are not at our service in *any* sort of way. We have no right to treat a man like a dog ; ‘ how then,’ asks St. Thomas, ‘ can it be lawful to treat an animal which has a sensitive soul as we do a piece of wood which has not ? ’ It is all very well to say that the brutes are not human beings. Everybody knows that. But what we have to be most careful about are the conclusions which we draw, or allow to be drawn, from this obvious premise.

Animals are not mere *things* and there is no civilised society on earth that would allow them to be treated as such. They are not human beings, but they are sensitive beings. They have a distinct place in creation ; they belong to a real category and their relationship to man is a relationship different altogether from that of a plant or a mineral. In short, there is that in every animal, however humble, which demands a treatment quite above that accorded to a tree or a flower.

THE LOVE OF NATURE

NATURE-lovers in general and animal-lovers in particular are sometimes talked about with the bemused curiosity with which we discuss philatelists or bridge-players. 'Well, of course, there is no accounting for tastes ; but personally, etc., etc.' But the love of nature is not just a harmless sort of idiosyncrasy or hobby. It is a matter of obligation and it is a matter vitally connected with our happiness, our sanity and general wholesomeness of character. The Christian has no option here. This urge can give a rational account of itself and it can give a Christian account of itself.

Our interest in and reverence for the lower sentient creation are determined by the fact that it is a manifestation of the divine love and the divine will. Creation is an act of love and God cannot but love everything that He has made. As a rational creature made to the divine likeness, it becomes my duty to love and respect all whatsoever He has made and therefore loves and respects ; and to the extent that I fail in the matter of this respect for and appreciation of the works of God, I do myself harm. God can be loved through the love we show His works, and God can be served through the service we render to the humblest and most helpless of His living creatures. And we are dishonouring God

and, therefore, dishonouring ourselves when we treat the world of nature with real irreverence and irresponsibility.

To begin with, the love of nature is instinctive. It is, therefore, a God-given thing. It has gone astray. It can lead us astray like our other instincts. That is nothing to the point. We need not accept the far-fetched explanations of this instinct. Some evolutionists would say that it is atavism that makes us want to climb trees—the call of our ancestors ; that it is atavism that makes boys run away to sea. Why do we feel, after long spells of inland life, an almost overmastering desire for the sight of the sea ? Is it because of our semi-maritime origin, because sea-water is mixed with our blood ?

But surely the obvious explanation is that we are attached to nature for the same reason that we are attached to home and to country. How can we help loving our providential environment ? It seems that if even the people in the slums keep pets of all sorts, tortoises and mice and so on, it is because these creatures represent some contact with the world of nature which for them is rather a remote world.

The world of nature and the world of grace are not mutually exclusive as St. Francis proved. Heaven is our eternal home but the earth is our terrestrial home and it is the tangible symbol of the home that awaits us above. Nay more, it is our novitiate, and by loving and reverencing what God has placed in it, we are preparing ourselves to love and reverence all that we shall find in our everlasting home.

Certainly our origin makes us part of nature,

and her relationship to us is so real and so dear that we call it *maternal*. Nor do we feel that the epithet is an exaggeration. Her power over us is so great that we cannot shake it off. In our moments of reverie, and, above all, in our moments of affliction, we take refuge in the farthest-away memories that are associated with the wonderment we felt in presence of the woods and hills and running streams. The call of nature is an imperious one and there are times in our life when it is well-nigh irresistible.

This spell would be inexplicable did it not represent some good thing. There is about it something far other than mere charm or sensuousness. It is invigorating and medicinal. Virtue seems to go out from it as virtue went out through the hem of Christ's garment. For example, much has been written, and well-written, of the influence that mountainous scenery has in forming the character of peoples; and a thoughtful writer of our day remarks that the friendship between men and animals ought to have a chapter in every treatise on human happiness.

In Christianity this instinctive love and respect for nature has received a religious consecration. The world of nature has been affected by grace and in early times we see the Church at work conciliating and purifying nature.

And what do we find in Him who is our example? 'For Jesus,' says Karl Adam, 'there was no such thing as "dead" nature. In mountain and in stream, in flower and in bird, He recognised and hailed the manifestation of His Father's Will. Hence came that love of nature which in its expression is

so realistic, so devoted and so profound as to ring completely modern. Nor was His love for natural things any merely sentimental enthusiasm. For Him nature was nothing more and nothing less than a living manifestation of the Will of God. But just for that very reason was His love of nature so genuine and so wholehearted.' Indeed, His references to nature are a revelation to us of the all-embracing love and providence of a God who feeds the birds of the air, clothes the grass of the field and regards the fall of the sparrows.

One of the saints who had the clearest sense of the Christian's duty to take Christ for a model was St. Francis of Assisi; and he loved all created things with a love which, like the rays of the sun, reached to every single creature. He was never small-minded in his attitude. He realised with a vividness which we may envy that, since all things in the universe are God's handiwork, it is our duty and it ought to be our joy to love them all—not more than Him but still to love them. He was neither a nature-worshipper, nor a cosmosophist nor a pantheist. At the same time his affection for nature was wholehearted and his contacts with it intimate and full of sympathy. Clearly perceiving the trace of the Creator in each and every one of the animals, he felt a certain kinship with them.

A noteworthy thing about St. Francis is the fact that religion placed no barrier between him and the world of nature. In fact, it simply deepened his sense of respect and his affection for it. When unbelieving men asked for proofs of God's love, he bade them study nature because in the book of

nature they could read the word 'goodness.' Padre Gemelli points out that St. Francis did not, like certain ascetics, love the animals solely to please God. He loved them because in his eyes they were very wonderful and lovable things fashioned by God's hands. For St. Francis, the whole universe with all it contains—plants, animals and men—was one great circle the centre of which was God. Dante has described the rich and attractive qualities of this Franciscan love of nature. 'Out of it,' he says, 'happiness came and a profound sense of the joy of living.'

In short there was highly developed in St. Francis that cosmic consciousness that is so much in evidence in certain parts of the Bible, for example in the *Song of the Three Children*.

O ye whales, bless the Lord.

O all ye fowls of the air, bless the Lord.

O all ye beasts and cattle, bless the Lord.

To St. Francis a wrong attitude to the lower animals was harmful. And by a wrong attitude he meant not merely an actively vicious one, but also one that is negative and non-committal. He considered that to stop short at the avoidance of cruelty was a complete misunderstanding of our relationship to them. We have a higher mission, and according to the Saint this higher mission involves our ranging ourselves on their side. What worried him was the alienation, the estrangement of man, not only from these sensitive creatures, but from nature itself.

Civilised man will hurt himself badly should he

come to regard the lower forms of life—the vegetation and the animals—as things that he may mishandle and exploit out of existence. A loss of reverence for what is plainly meant to be revered is an unhealthy sign and our alienation from the natural creation is contributing to our degeneration. This loss and this alienation will make us neither better nor happier.

Years ago Ruskin drew attention to the dangers of this tendency, to the damage we do to ourselves when we get out of touch and out of sympathy with the wonderful natural world that we inhabit. He seemed to think that this estrangement is bound to produce an unnatural, warped and unwholesome type of human being ; and perhaps he was right. ‘ You cannot,’ he says, ‘ sympathise rightly with the higher unless you sympathise with the lower.’ Herbert Spencer also points out that the behaviour of men to animals and their behaviour to each other bear a vital relationship. If this be true, then humanitarians are well within their rights in claiming that in working to promote a humane and Christian understanding and appreciation of nature, they are working in the interests of humanity itself.

St. Francis gave a spiritual interpretation to the Book of Nature. In his eyes all created beings were like so many streams flowing from that source of boundless love from which he would fain drink, and their diverse virtues seemed to him to form a celestial harmony to which his soul was attuned. To recover and to reinstate this spiritual interpretation of the Book of Nature—to restore to civilised man the lost

heritage of his cosmic consciousness—this would appear to be one of the urgent tasks of the future. It may be that by applying ourselves to the work of this restoration we shall be doing more than we think towards the solution of the big problem : ‘ How to prevent man from degenerating within the framework of his own civilisation ? ’ We thought that we could not degenerate if we were civilised. We see now that we can. But why is it ? What are the factors and influences at work producing this degeneracy ? Moral and spiritual factors they are in the main—that is to say, psychological factors. But these psychological factors are now receiving attention, and they are going to receive more, so that the outlook is promising. The habits which produce organic diseases are rightly regarded as dangerous. Now we shall have to turn our attention to the wrong views and ways of thinking that are producing things like cruelty, callousness, brutality, ruthlessness, the war-spirit and so on.

Perhaps if the study of psychology continues to make headway, we shall see the elimination of some of the abuses of nature which are, at the moment, in full swing. There are signs that the study of cosmology may yet become a serious study once again, that attention is going to be paid to the vital matter of man’s relationship to the cosmos.

And most hopeful of all is the fact that material science is becoming more and more discredited as the years pass. Modern science has deluded itself into thinking that because it was studying man’s nerves and tissues, dissecting him, exhausting his chemical and anatomical aspects, it was studying

man. But the vital and fundamental factors which contribute to the building up of man as a living person have been almost banished from the field of scientific research. For far too long a privileged position has been given to the physical aspects of the human being. Matter has been separated from mind, and to matter has been assigned a greater reality than to mind. Scientists have neglected the study of the various aspects of personality and consciousness. They have passed by the data supplied by introspection and by the study of behaviour. They have paid no attention to the influences which are making us what we are.

This one-sidedness has been productive of very great evil. And productive of evil has been the attitude of science to nature. It has been all too prone to look at nature without reverence and to join hands with commercialism in its ruthless exploitation. It has cast aside its inner mystery and has left us with nothing except the husk, nothing except a deanimated nature, a nature reduced to the mere ghost of itself. It has isolated nature from its divine context, cut it adrift from God and made a present of it to the experimentalist.

We must check this. We have to remember that the Christian is not allowed to look at nature with merely scientific eyes.

As far as our part of the world is concerned, the crude idolatry which made nature an object of worship is practically a thing of the past. But we have still to reckon with those who claim the right to lay sacrilegious hands upon it. This they claim to be doing in the interests of man. The energy of

high-minded people ought, therefore, to be directed to the examination of this claim. Does man stand to gain *in the long run* by any and every form of unrestrained exploitation and experimentation?

THE QUESTION OF RIGHTS

NOTHING is more detrimental to truth than the atmosphere engendered by acute controversy. In the heat of the conflict, opponents fail to understand and then go on to misinterpret one another. The elucidation of truth demands a painstaking effort; and, for this reason, the task of convincing the critic or adversary is always an extremely difficult task. Christian teaching is not to be apprehended at a glance, and yet a glance is sometimes all that is forthcoming. Christians, therefore, have the right to insist that Christian pronouncements be examined with earnestness and impartiality; and they are convinced that these will be the more readily appreciated and accepted, the more thoroughly they are understood.

On the other side Christians have a duty and responsibility to their own pronouncements. They *must be quite sure that they know what they are*, and they must be quite sure that their explanation of them is authentic and genuine. Our pronouncements will not be accepted, or even understood, unless we are willing to disentangle them from our own conjectural interpretations and arbitrary conclusions.

Some propositions are like some words—they are apt to create an association of ideas which does not

correspond with their ontological meaning. Because St. Paul lays down the proposition that 'the husband is the head of the wife,' it will not do to conclude from this that women are inferior creatures—just the chattels of men—and that all agitation in favour of women's rights is sheer heresy. In the same way, because Christian teaching asserts that the brutes have neither personal status nor rights, it will not do to conclude therefrom that they are delivered up whole and entire to the sweet will of man, their master, and that all agitation in favour of animals is sheer heresy. Really intelligent critics do not quarrel with our *principles*: but they are gravely concerned at what they conceive to be the low *tone* of popular Christian thought, at the attitude of sheer puzzle-headedness and obstruction into which Christians allow their principles to engineer them.

Christian teaching, in the face of the menace of a materialism which sees in man nothing more than a highly developed brute, is compelled to emphasise the truth that the lower animals have no personal or moral status and, therefore, no personal or moral rights. The supervaluation of the brutes implies a corresponding depreciation of man. The brutes have nothing to gain by it and man has everything to lose. Scientific materialism is calculated to weaken and to destroy man's realisation of his moral responsibility with a consequent injury to the whole cause of humanitarianism. Cruelty to animals results from our failure to rise to the full height of our stature, to realise our God-like dignity and worth; so that any attack upon the worth and dignity of man must inevitably react unfavourably upon all that man is

in contact with and is responsible for. If the critics of Christian teaching would but reflect, they would realise that the materialistic supervaluation of the brutes is calculated to injure rather than to promote the cause of Animal Welfare. The lower animals may confidently look to us for protection as long as we view them from a lofty height. They will look in vain if we degrade ourselves to their level.

‘Behold the birds of the air,’ the Master said : but the whole point of this invitation was to emphasise the truth : ‘Are not you of much more value than they ?’

Critics of the Church assert that her sole contribution to the Animal Question is the loose and easily abused affirmation that the brutes have no rights. Of course, this assertion is false and is on a par with the other assertion that the Church’s sole contribution to the Social Question is a loose affirmation of the rights of property owners. It is doubtful if any single Christian moralist would assent to this proposition, ‘the brutes have no rights,’ as it stands. Such a proposition is well-calculated to provide cruelty with a convenient sophistry behind which to shelter itself ; because if the brutes have no rights of any sort, it is difficult to see how there can be any such thing as cruelty to animals.

In a pamphlet on *Animal Welfare* published by the Catholic Truth Society, Dom Ambrose Agius, O.S.B., goes at some length into this vexed question. He shows that whereas the brutes, not being moral persons, can have no personal rights in the human sense, ‘yet they have rights’ and they cannot be maltreated without these rights being violated.

These 'rights' come to them by reason of their relationship first to their Creator and secondly to the whole created order. Dom Agius then tells us that in reply to a question asked by Mr. Weld-Blundell: 'Have animals rights of any kind as against their masters or owners?' the Holy Office—whose answers are authoritative—answered with a categorical 'Yes.' Further on Dom Agius gives two more answers of the Holy Office:

- (2) Does the Holy Office hold it to be sinful to torture dumb animals? 'Yes.'
- (3) Does the Holy Office hold such sins to be degrading to the soul and disposition of the tormentor? 'Yes.'

The trouble is that the word 'rights' as used in common speech does not represent the equivalent of the legal word '*jura*.' Technically and literally, the brutes have no *vices*; but in ordinary conversation we talk about the presence or absence of vices in a dog. At any rate, it would be unfortunate if the already sorely harassed animals were to be further victimised just because the English language is lacking in variety or precision.

The rejection of a personal status and, therefore, of personal rights does not mean, however, that the brutes have no claims upon us. If we consult our English dictionary we shall see that the animals have some of the things for which the word 'rights' stands. One definition of the word 'rights' is: 'that which is in accordance with the will of God,' and it is evident that the animals have rights in that sense. Whatever power God gives us over these

sensitive creatures of His, is given subject to the strict moral condition that it be used in conformity to His own divine perfections.

It might be appropriate to quote here a few passages from a book lately published in France entitled *Le Travail et l'Homme*. It deals expressly with the Social Question, but at the same time it emphasises an important general principle :

To be content with endlessly repeating the classical texts without an effort to work out their conclusions, is a mark of mental laziness to which we are only too prone. There exists a way of repeating the old truths which merely betrays a spirit of fear of consequences, deductions and inferences ; a nervousness in coming to the point, an anxiety to leave things alone and as they are, whilst keeping on the side of the angels with edifying if non-committal quotations. But fidelity to truth must be a live and fearless loyalty. Pope Leo XIII was very emphatic, whenever he had pronounced upon the best that could be gathered at the time, in stirring Catholics to continue thinking, working out programmes, discovering new applications and adaptations, and acting, regardless of the possibility of mistakes, which Bishops and Popes are there to set right, as long as thought and action are not brought to a standstill.



THE MYSTERY OF NATURE

THE Son of God made man invited us to study the birds of the air. Such an injunction surely consecrates for all time man's interest in the Animal Kingdom. That must be worthy of our serious attention which the Master Himself bade us contemplate. But He went further. He wished us to contemplate in the frame of mind which is conducive to the learning of a lesson ; and if the frame of mind be not a respectful and reverent one, the lessons of nature—like all lessons—will be taught to us in vain. 'The man who cannot wonder-worship—were he president of innumerable Royal Societies and carried the whole *Mécanique Céleste* and Hegel's philosophy and the epitome of all laboratories and observatories with their results in his single head—is but a pair of spectacles behind which there is no eye.'

The world of beasts and of man is the same world and yet not the same. The animals are there lying across our path, swimming in the sea and flying in the air we breathe. It is easier to escape out of the society of man than out of their society.

'There is society where none intrudes.' But the brutes intrude everywhere. We cannot ignore them and they cannot escape us. Without them Robinson

Crusoe could hardly have supported his solitary confinement ; and through them the explorer of to-day who adventures the polar latitudes or the fastnesses of the Himalayas finds the spell of his loneliness broken.

And yet 'can anything be more marvellous or startling,' asks Newman, 'unless we are used to it, than that we should have a race of beings about us whom we see, and as little know their state or can describe their interests or their destiny, as we can tell of the inhabitants of the sun or moon? It is indeed a very overpowering thought, when we fix our minds on it, that we familiarly use, I may say hold intercourse with creatures who are as much strangers to us—as mysterious—as if they were fabulous, unearthly beings—more powerful than man and yet his slaves—which Eastern superstitions have invented. We have more real knowledge about the Angels than about the brutes. They have apparently passions, habits, and a certain accountableness ; but all is a mystery about them. We do not know whether they can sin or not, whether they are under punishment, whether they are to live after this life. We inflict very great suffering on a portion of them ; and they, in turn, every now and then, seem to retaliate upon us as if by a wonderful law. We depend upon them in various important ways ; we use their labour, we eat their flesh. This, however, relates to such of them as come near us : cast your thoughts abroad on the whole number of them, large and small, in vast forests or in the water or in the air ; and then say whether the presence of such countless multitudes living on the earth without

ascertainable object is not as mysterious as anything which Scripture says about the Angels ? ’

The mystery of the Animal Kingdom has fascinated mankind from the earliest times. ‘ Now the serpent,’ says Genesis, ‘ was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth ’ ; and this little excursion into the field of biology was destined to be the forerunner of many. Speaking of the bee, Maeterlinck notes how this strange creature, which lives in a society under complicated laws and executes prodigious labours in the darkness, has from the beginning attracted the notice of men.

Admiranda tibi levium spectacula rerum
Magnanimosque duces totiusque ordine gentis
Mores et studia et populos et proelia dicam.

This is how Virgil in the fourth book of his *Georgics* introduces ‘ the wonderous pageant of a tiny world with its stout-hearted chiefs and its nation-like equipment of character, tastes, tribes and battles.’ And he ends his investigation on a note of reverence :

Swayed by such sights and examples, some have maintained that the bees are endowed with a portion of the divine intelligence and a draught of the heavenly ether ; for God, they say, pervades all things—earth and sea’s expanse and the depth of heaven ; from Him men and beasts of every kind draw, each at birth, the slender stream of life ; yea, unto Him all beings thereafter return, or, when unmade, are restored. There is no room for death but, while yet living, they rise to the ranks of the stars and mount to the heaven above.

‘Bees,’ says Marcus Terentius Varro in his treatise *On Agriculture*, ‘are not solitaries like eagles, but are like human beings. They have three tasks : food, dwelling and toil. The geometricians prove that the hexagon of the comb encloses the largest possible amount of space. Their commonwealth is like the States of men, for here are king, government and fellowship. They seek only the pure. They are with good reason called “the winged attendants of the Muses.”’

We see from the *Ion* of Euripides that even the little pagan Samuel who ministered in the courts of the temple of Phœbus had his respectful hesitations. When the birds were threatening to alight and to build on the roof of the shrine he warned them off and then reluctantly made ready his bow and arrows.

Loth were I to slaughter such as ye,
Which bear unto mortals the augury
Of the gods : but a burden is laid upon me :
I am Phœbus’ thrall and I will not refrain
My service to them that my life sustain.

Montaigne’s cat puzzled him. ‘It may be,’ he reflects, ‘that when I think I am amusing my cat, in reality it is doing its best to amuse me.’ The diversity of their habits and instincts bewilders us—the odd mixture in them of tameness and ferocity, of fear and confidence, of docility and resistance. We are puzzled above all by their uncanny aloofness from ourselves. ‘I am the cat that walks by myself and all things are the same to me.’ But this self-sufficiency is not confined to the cat. Right through the Animal Kingdom there runs a note of almost

uncanny independence. The dog would seem to be the only animal that takes anything like a real interest in us, enters into a full alliance with us. The others either fear us and fly at our approach, or they consent to endure the yoke and restraint we put upon them. Many of them are simply our victims, acquiescent or rebellious as the case may be. Whereas the dog seems to put the whole of its soul into the simple operation of carrying its master's paper in its mouth, the horse draws its load with the detached and disinterested air of an ascetic whose mind is simply not on this world.

These creatures which, as we keep telling ourselves, have been created simply and solely for our use, have not been endowed with and—with the exception of the dog—never seem able to acquire the qualities and demeanour which we expect to find in servants. Everywhere amongst them there is an almost total absence of servility. There is in them a certain unmistakable dignity which cannot be wholly alienated or destroyed. The hunted animal will turn round and face its destroyers at the last as though it scorned to turn its back upon them; and an eye-witness of the Bull Fight has remarked that 'in the act of falling the brute seemed to tower head and shoulders above its persecutors.'

Strange, indeed, it is that although they have been so close to us for all these thousands of years, we have not yet succeeded—except in the case of a Saint here and there—in bridging the gulf that separates us from them.

In the pages of literature and the canvases of art they confront us and exercise over us the same

strange fascination. The experiment has been tried of reading passages from the *Book of Tobias* to a Bible History class, and in every case the faces of the children lighted up with a smile of surprised satisfaction at finding, in the midst of the awesome gravity of the sacred text, so homely an item as the wagging of a dog's tail.

And no one feels that either art or literature is the loser by such accessories. No one feels that the poet or artist demeans himself or his vocation by such preoccupation. As Ruskin says in his address to artists :

Throughout the animal kingdom no creature is so vast or so minute that you cannot deal with it or bring it into service. Is there anything in common life too mean to be ennobled by your touch? Do not fancy that you will lower yourselves by sympathy with the lower creatures. You cannot sympathise rightly with the higher unless you do with the lower.

Ruskin admits the difficulty of knowing why some of them were made at all : and this is but one puzzle the more. He confesses to having wasted time in keeping the kitten's tail out of the candles on his reading-desk—the useless tail of a useless beast. 'God created the cat in order to give man the pleasure of caressing the tiger.' 'I cannot help thinking,' writes Dean Inge, 'that the Creator made some animals and some human beings just for fun'; and there is the story of the informal debate at Oxford on the question of God's sense of humour—

a debate triumphantly decided by the appeal : ' Did He not create the crab ? ' ' Truly, my God,' says the Abbé Gaume in describing the days of Creation, ' Thou seemest, in continually creating new difficulties, not only to amuse Thyself before me, but to take a pleasure in bewildering my mind.' And the inspired writer himself, speaking in the name of Wisdom, declares : ' I was with Him forming all things and was delighted every day, playing before Him at all times : playing in the world.'

Since reverence is a necessary concomitant of all mystery, the profound mystery of the brute creation is evidently intended to deepen our respect for it, as surely as the mystery of sex is meant to deepen our respect for sex. Between us and the brutes God has created a barrier which we, with all our trying, cannot surmount and which they, apparently, are unwilling to pass. Chastened and wondering we pause before this barrier and perhaps we are meant to do so. Certain it is that this mystery provides the curiosity of mankind with an inexhaustible subject of study and investigation and, therefore, contributes enormously to his happiness. It is only within recent years that the problem of the winter home of swallows has been solved. Even the great Linnæus thought that they hibernated under water, in spite of the fact that they have no gills. And as for the bees, their scientific history only begins in the seventeenth century with the discoveries of Swammerdam.

And everywhere and always the animals in inviting our scrutiny and attention challenge us at

the same time. They challenge not only the emotions of man, but his reason. They compel us to interrogate ourselves as do no other aspects of the lower creation. They confront us with a choice, a decision which we feel to be a moral one. 'Do we owe them anything at all? If so, how much? Is there between us and them a relationship of any sort—a common bond or tie—and, therefore, a genuine responsibility?' It is doubtful if at any period of history man has really succeeded in reconciling himself to his own arbitrary behaviour to the brutes. Instinctively he feels the need of some excuse, economic or humanitarian. Even the experimentalist—like the man in the Gospel—seeks to justify himself, feels the necessity of doing so. 'After all they were created for our use and what better use could we put them to?' Instinctively we find ourselves falling back upon some metaphysical consolation in the shape of a theory or principle. We fell the tree and level the forest and the field without a second thought; but in the case of the brutes, a note of interrogation is whispered somewhere, at any rate deep down in the subconsciousness. As we shall see, the very pagans did not altogether succeed in stifling the questions of this inner voice or in evading the perplexity which it occasions.

THE RIGHT TO KILL

BUT the brute creation confronts man with another mystery before which it is not possible for him to pause in an attitude of mere respect. The general demoralisation or disorder of the animals, their ferocity, their predatory instincts, the wanton multiplication of certain species, the emergence of vermin and parasites—all this is something in the nature of a real aggression and man has to defend himself against it. St. Francis of Assisi ‘reasoned’ with the Wolf of Gubbio; and the legends of the Saints represent them as more or less recovering the benevolent dominion over the brutes which obtained in the Garden of Paradise. ‘With Christ,’ says Sulpicius Severus, ‘every brute is wise and every savage creature gentle.’ St. Kevin restricted the agricultural activities of his monks so that the birds might not lose their sanctuary. Some of the Fathers of the Desert were ministered to by lions and tigers. St. Gall ruled over the bears in the Alps like a superior over a body of docile monks. The very vultures played with St. Columbanus; and St. Rose shared her hermitage with the mosquitoes.

Doubtless, all this is an illustration of the happy results of the coming of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and it is a picture of the ‘once upon a time,’

the order of things as God originally planned it. To the brutes these Saints represented the primitive man who was God's friend, and in their presence they lost that instinctive dread with which our cruelty and lack of sympathy have inspired them. In his treatise *Against Julian*, St. Augustine says : ' If you thought with real Christian hearts of the beatitude of the garden of Eden, you would admit to it neither death nor the ferocity of the brutes. You would represent them to yourselves as obedient to man and as unable to seek their food in the destruction of their own kind.'

The regenerated world of which Isaias caught a glimpse was one in which there was to be neither hurting nor killing.

Yet, it cannot be denied that we must, to a big extent, accept the world of nature as we find it. There are in it sinister and hostile elements. The Christian does not believe that the evil which infects nature is either intentional or deliberate. He sees in the cruel and perverted forms of the lower creation an effect of the aboriginal catastrophe in which everything is involved. But these perversions and disorders have to be reckoned with. Man cannot afford to stand by with folded arms in the face of this widespread aggression. It will not do for us to become obsessed by charming ideas to the utter exclusion of the stern realities of existence. The idealist can easily become an escapist—that is to say, one who, as the Americans say, looks the facts of life in the back of the neck.

Doubtless if we were all saints the need for drastic and unpleasant measures would be eliminated. We

would be able to lie down with the lion and the leopard and amuse ourselves with the asp and the basilisk. It is said that when a storm threatened the expedition of Columbus, the great navigator calmed the wind and the waters by reciting to them the first chapter of St. John's Gospel. We may well envy a 'cosmic consciousness' of this description; but until such a time as man has won back this portion of his lost inheritance, he can hardly avoid countering the aggression of nature with an aggression less ruthless, indeed, but yet to some extent uncompromising.

At the same time, a great deal of the killing that goes on is just stupid and even wanton. Some make the silly horror they have of 'creepy crawly things' an excuse for stamping upon every small creature that crosses their path. And much of the killing that goes on is begotten of a real ignorance of natural history. Farmers and horticulturists conduct campaigns against the wasp without, apparently, being aware of what the products of the soil owe to the foraging habits of these insects. The day indeed may come when we shall know the providential place in the scheme of nature that has been assigned to each animal and we shall act accordingly.

The spirit of St. Francis can be in us even although we draw the line at the letter of his example. He regarded as neighbours—even to the extent of calling them brothers and sisters—the sparrows and bees he fed during the winter, the lambs he rescued from the slaughter-house, the doves for which he built a nest, the very worms which he used to remove to a place of safety. . . . A Utopian situation certainly,

and one that is impossible of reproduction on any wide scale. But yet the idealism of St. Francis was inspired by God and intended as, in some sort, a lesson to ourselves.

Some extremists maintain that we have no right to kill animals even for food. They would extend the scope of the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' to all living creatures. While pure Buddhism forbids the taking of life, corrupt Buddhism has sacrifices. Younghusband mentions a shrine near Lhasa infested by vermin which the devout pilgrims feed in order to acquire merit. It is, however, their doctrine of the transmigration of souls that prevents the Buddhists from killing. They have little scruple about cruelty.

Certainly, we must allow that the brutes may be killed when they endanger the life of man and when their destruction is necessary to maintain man's life. In the Old Testament God authorised their killing both for food and for sacrifices, although both kinds of killing came in only after and in consequence of the Fall. Very interesting attempts have been made to explain why exactly God sanctioned the sacrificing of animals, but their examination is outside the scope of this little book. The Old Dispensation was an imperfect law and it has been superseded. Divorce was permitted under the Old Law, on account of the people's hardness of heart: and the same stiff-necked generation compelled God to allow a king to rule over them so that they might be like their neighbours. It is important to know all the ins-and-outs of the reasons why this or that was authorised or permitted under the Old Law.

In *Genesis* we see that the first bloody sacrifice was offered on Abel's own initiative. It would be an exaggeration to say that this urge to sacrifice animals represents a refined and high-minded instinct. Fallen man's urge to offer sacrifice is sound and spontaneous and is as old as religion itself. But man can sacrifice other things besides animals ; and, indeed, it seems to be agreed that bloody sacrifice was not the primitive form of sacrifice. God accepted and sanctioned the sacrifices of the Old Dispensation ; but that is not to say that He accepted and sanctioned them as being noble, elevated forms of worship. In His mercy He has willed to accept much that was crude and undeveloped. He has regard to the intention. Nor must we ignore the figurative and anticipatory character of the Jewish sacrifices. Therein lay their value.

Besides, in these sacrifices the destruction of the animal was not what mattered. The sacrifice does not consist in the mere killing but in the offering. Mere killing or destroying does not and cannot honour a God who is the Creator and Protector of life. What honoured God in the sacrifice was the *offering*. Under the Old Law the sacrificing priest did not kill the victim. That was done by the Levite who remained outside the circle of the sacrificers. The Sacred Writers represent God as being well pleased with these sacrifices—with the offering, yes ; but not with the mere killing. In the bloody sacrifices, the sacrificer was not offering to God mere death and destruction. The blood was offered because it stood for a positive thing, namely, life.

However, what alone matters to us is that in the Christian dispensation there is no sacrificial killing of animals.

On the other hand, the permission to kill for food has not been rescinded. It was given in the ninth chapter of *Genesis*. God delivers up to fallen man everything that moves and lives, that they may be his meat, even as the green herbs had formerly been his meat. If we read this momentous passage carefully we shall feel that there is an eerie sort of sarcasm about it. God seems to have given His people permission to eat flesh in the same tone of voice in which He gave them permission to have kings.

(1) 'Let the fear and dread of you be on all the beasts of the earth ; everything that liveth shall be meat for you.'

(2) 'And the Lord said to Samuel : testify to them the right of the king that shall reign over them. This shall be the right of the king ; he will take your sons and put them in his chariots : your daughters also he will take, and your fields and your vineyards.'

In allowing the Jews to eat flesh, God made an exception of flesh containing blood, as we see in *Exodus*. Later other exceptions were made. After *Deuteronomy* they were allowed to eat only those animals that have cloven feet and that chew the cud. All others were regarded as impure. The fat of certain animals was also forbidden, and the blood of all animals was prohibited under pain of death. This prohibition was, in part, intended to denote the moral purity which the Hebrews were to strive

after—to preserve them from the vices, so to say, with which these impure animals were associated. In *Leviticus* God says distinctly that they were not to defile themselves by means of unclean animals.

At any rate, the permission to kill animals for food was given by God. When we get to the New Testament we find it quite taken for granted that animals may be killed for food. The whole controversy in the *Acts of the Apostles* about clean and unclean animals makes this quite clear. Then, besides, our Lord multiplied the fishes and ate a piece of fish.

Some maintain that no importance is to be attached to these *alleged* prohibitions, as they call them. They say that in the Old Testament the human is inextricably mixed up with the divine and man's fancies identified with God's commandments. The danger of this frame of mind is obvious. It exposes the Scriptures to that selective or 'picking and choosing' process which has been the origin of many heresies. It is undeniable that in the Old Testament the human is mixed up with the divine ; but they are not inextricably mixed up and we cannot consistently repudiate God's sanction of this or that when the sanction is plainly revealed. It will not do to sweep aside as the interpolation of some unscrupulous medieval meat-eating copyist everything in the Gospel that tells against vegetarianism.

It is argued that, by sanctioning killing, our Lord was upholding something that is the result of man's sin. Tolerating would, perhaps, be the better word. Our Lord did not attack or subvert existing institu-

tions even though these originated in evil. The civil power is to some extent rooted in evil and He accepted the civil power. He would not allow His followers to evade the fiscal demands of the Romans. The coin was to be given to Cæsar and this in spite of the fact that Cæsar was—well, Cæsar. He bids us endure even violence, but that is not to say that He approves of violence. Although He made it clear that the spirit of Mammon is not compatible with the spirit of the Gospel, He did not impose upon all the absolute renunciation of wealth. He incited no one to attack the institution of property although He knew that private property often has its source in evil. He took the world as He found it. He bids us strive to realise the kingdom in the midst of, and in spite of, the actualities of our fallen state.

Some vegetarians let loose against meat-eaters the stormy invectives of Tertullian or of this or that other Father of the Church. But we must quote the personal opinions of the Fathers of the Church with caution. Some of these enthusiastic vegetarians are not nearly so keen on Tertullian when you remind them that it was he who said : ‘ Everything ought to be in common amongst us except women.’ Tertullian rather suggests that meat-eaters are heading for damnation. But if we read what some of the Fathers have to say about fasting, we might gather that all non-fasters are heading for damnation.

To say that meat-eating is sinful will not do. Vegetarianism may come back, but under all the conditions of present-day life it is not yet a practical ideal.

It is all very well to say that had we the killing of our own meat we should all be vegetarians. That

is not in the least likely, on the supposition that there exists a scarcity of eatables. Really hungry people will very soon get the better of their qualms and inhibitions. Thus, for example, the author of an interesting travel book called *South Latitude* tells us frankly that, after a period of isolation on an ice-trap, 'I who hate killing animals felt all my high and humane principles melting like water before the craving for fresh food which possessed me.'

Vegetarians maintain that they are going back to the food-eating habits of primitive man. This is true enough. We see from *Genesis* that the food originally created for man and beast was a vegetarian food. Paul Claudel says that he does not believe that there were no carnivorous animals in the earthly Paradise, but it is not easy to see how we can help believing it. In the first chapter of *Genesis* the fruits and herbs of the earth are provided for man and beast, and then in chapter nine comes the change. The abattoir is one of the signs of the Fall, and war is another, and the gallows a third. As someone says : 'The milk of the cow was no more created for man's food than man was created to be the food of the Bengal tiger.' The classical writers who describe the Golden Age insist upon this feature of it—at least, some of them do, Virgil, for example, and Ovid. But more instructive than these poets is the statement by the Father of Medicine himself. Speaking of food in relation to health, Hippocrates notices that the cattle that are nourished by the products of the earth grow and live without disease, and he adds : 'I am of opinion, that, to begin with, man also used this sort of nourishment.'

At the same time we must be on our guard against some of these 'returns' to nature. Nudism is a return to nature, a return to the clothes-free condition of our first parents : but when Adam and Eve were clothes-free, they were also sin-free and that makes some difference. In so far as any vegetarian movement lays down the principle that the killing of an animal for food is a sin, it is under suspicion.

We must concede to man the right to kill animals : and we must concede to man the right to inflict suffering upon them. The Fall has given man the right to kill them—at any rate has made killing a necessity, and with this necessity goes the necessity of inflicting pain. But there is nothing absolute about this right or necessity. Because we may kill, it does not follow that we may kill at will or at random ; and because we may kill, it does not follow that we may torture. The question of killing for amusement or recreation is a debatable question. St. Francis de Sales called blood sports 'a hellish pleasure.'¹ In other words, St. Francis claimed the right to sit in judgement on the blood sportsman.

To kill needs a reason which God would approve : and so with the infliction of suffering. In *Deuteronomy* God said : 'kill and eat' ; but the right to kill gives us no right to inflict unnecessary suffering. Society recognises its right to take the life of the criminal on the scaffold and of the enemy on the field of battle ; but even our society will not recognise the right to kill *anyhow* either on the scaffold or on the battle-field. At one time the bodies of

¹ *The Spirit of St. Francis de Sales*, by the Bishop of Belley, Burns Oates & Washbourne, p. 498, in which the Saint's views on Hunting are set out in detail.

condemned criminals were delivered up to be vivisected. The society of the period thought that the right to kill gave it the right to torture. The logicians of the day argued that he who has the right to do the greater has the right to do the less. But society has learned sense and has outgrown that particular piece of barbarity. Because our society claims the right to hang a murderer, it does not claim the right to turn him out on to the moors and hunt him to death as it does the stag. We may kill, perhaps, but we must kill with a minimum of suffering.

In the sacrifices of the Old Law, God distinctly commanded that the animals be killed in the least painful way. We need an excuse both for killing and hurting and it must be a good one. As Cardinal Newman says in one of his sermons : ' We may use them, we may destroy them, provided we can give a rational account of what we do.' ' A rational account '—perhaps herein lies the root of all the controversy. One person's rational account is apt to differ from that of another. Hence the difficulty of laying down rigid rules and launching positive prohibitions. It may be that, in all the circumstances, those who wish to foster among mankind a more generous and more Christian understanding and treatment of the brutes, would do well to concentrate more upon the education of public opinion than upon an impatient demand for negative anathemas and prohibitive legislation. A change of mind all round may be relied upon to bring people's ' rational account ' more into line with the spirit of Christ.

SENTIMENT AND ALL THAT

THE impartial study of the Animal Question is hampered by the prevalent disease of emotionalism ; and equally the cause of Animal Welfare stands to lose rather than gain by making sentiment the final tribunal at which to try the case. The Christian will endeavour to base his or her attitude to the brutes upon something more solid and sacred than mere 'gush.' It was not just sentiment that inspired St. Francis of Assisi, but the spirit of Christ.

At the same time, we have to make some allowance for the mood and temper of the age. It is easy enough to quarrel with the tone and wording of some of the appeals made by Protective Societies. It is galling to some to think that such appeals meet with so great a success. But until such time as the public is educated out of its sentimentality and up to a loftier standard of judging serious questions, the Societies must content themselves with getting money the best way they can. The entire question of methods and ways-and-means is a difficult question, and religious bodies themselves have to face it and come to terms with it. A bazaar is probably not the most high-minded form of appeal, but it has been found to be an effective one. It ought not to be so, but under the existing devitalised conditions, it is a fact

that some people's sentimentality is, for the animals, a last line of defence.

It is extremely difficult to get popular propaganda to behave itself, especially when the public to which it is addressed has become irrational and hysterical. A note of falsification runs through nearly every public appeal in our time. We are living in an age of exaggeration. Every pronouncement has to be pitched on a key that is more or less falsetto and it is not supposed to be 'good publicity' otherwise. A firm cannot advertise its cigarettes without asking you to believe that they are the brand smoked by the blessed in Heaven. Modern propaganda is usually entrusted to those who are good at yapping. In many cases the appeals are drawn up by professional advertisers who have nothing in view except their practical efficiency and success. It may happen that the very same publicity agent is responsible both for the leaflet that defends something and for the leaflet that attacks it. It is not difficult to understand how we ourselves would act were we in his place. It is his *job* to launch two effective appeals. In his *defence* of Vivisection he will score a popular point by charging the anti-vivisectionists with a cruelty akin to that of the pagan conquerors who sacrificed human captives on the altar of some animal god. In his leaflet *against* Vivisection he will charge the vivisectionist with the diabolism of the witches who sought to discover secrets by means of torture and blood-shedding, and with the superstition of the ancient Augurs who searched for favourable omens among the viscera of dissected brutes.

Certainly, the appeal to emotion is superficially a shorter cut to the end in view than the appeal to reason : and where Animal Welfare is concerned it is the sentimental appeal that appears to 'get across' ! But it is precisely because emotional appeals work so easily that we have to be on our guard against them, not only in our own interest but in the interest of the cause we have at heart. Herein the longest way round may be, in reality, the shortest cut. The spread of a rational conviction is far slower and more laborious than the spread of a mere sympathy, but the former holds the better promise of stability. Movements engineered by sentimental appeals flare up and send out a shower of sparks, but there is always the risk of reaction.

The 'blessed faculty of intuition' is not a thing apart from reason—utterly divorced from reason, although unfortunately many people take refuge in what they deem to be their intuitions just to save themselves the bother of having to think. Intuition is a godsend to fools. As Mr. Joad says : 'Those who are weak in the head substitute the stirrings of the bowels for the processes of reason.'

Nevertheless, although there is a way of attaching ourselves to animals and to the Animal Movement with the nervous system and with the nervous system alone, sentiment has its place in our life and, therefore, has a right to some influence where the brutes are concerned. We need not be afraid of being like the Saints ; like the Saint who could not restrain her tears when she saw an animal deprived of the life that God had given it, like the Saint who

said : ' If pity were a sin, I could not help committing it.' We need not hesitate to emulate the emotion of Him who had ' compassion on the multitude.'

There are good and bad emotions. There are feelings that can easily lead us astray, feelings that are shallow and evanescent. Our emotions are bad masters but they can be made into very good servants. It is, in part, their office to carry us in the right direction—by their impetus, to intensify our intellectual acts. Pity takes the heart into its own hands, so to say, without waiting for cold reasons. When we act justly our justice is all the more intense when it is warmed by pity. After all, in making the sign of the cross, the hand goes to the heart as well as to the head.

It is difficult to keep the emotions in their place and some find it more difficult than others. St. Francis de Sales found it difficult. But it will not do to talk of emotion as though it were a sort of disease. Considering the important function that has been assigned to sentiment in our personal and social life, it would be absurd to treat it as though it were a mere fungus or parasite. St. Augustine said : ' If we have no feelings at all, we certainly do not live as we ought. A good life is governed by good emotions. Some take credit to themselves for being influenced by no emotions whatever, but this shows them to be devoid of all humanity. A limb is not straight because it is immovable ; nor is it healthy because it has no sensation.' If we cast emotion out of our life and out of our religion both are going to suffer. We have to aim at an all-round com-

pletion and expression of ourselves, and we are not complete unless the whole gamut of the keys is being used. All the receptive parts of our soul are good in their own way. Reason is good and so is imagination and so is sensitiveness. Nothing is bad except abuse and disorder.

Reason and emotion have been brought together as partners in the one firm. And we cannot really separate the two except in theory. In theory we can separate the light and heat of a candle, but not in practice. And to the candle that God meant to guide us, reason supplies the light and sentiment the heat. In every normal human act reason and emotion co-operate. The emotion which inspires me to perform a generous deed may be said to produce the morality of the deed, because in this case the emotion itself is highly reasonable. Sentiment is thought blended with feeling, thought made affectionate, sympathetic and, therefore, moral. Rational demonstration is not the sole criterion of truth. To that extent the saying may pass 'the heart has its reasons, etc.' 'Logic is but one of several combatants in human hearts.' Even those reasoning processes which we imagine to be cold and detached are to some extent affected by the qualities of our character. At any rate, we shall land in serious difficulties if we refuse to admit the evidence only of dialectic reasoning. Religion itself is not a mere matter of reasoning. The over-rationalising of religion is a real danger. Religion is not just an adventure of the brain. Our attitude to all the problems of religion, to God and His Providence,

is determined by our total personality and not simply by our reason.

Those who maintain that kindness to a brute must lower the dignity of man and subject his reason to a degrading tyranny, do not understand either man's dignity or his reason. There was nothing undignified about St. Francis ; and there was no nonsense about him. Neither reason nor emotion can be dethroned with impunity. For the sound exercise of his reason man requires to have *all* his wits about him ; and a balanced, harmonious life demands the adequate exercise of our component parts.

Truly, sentimental people are not always wise ; but then mathematicians are not always wise, nor yet logicians.

The man in the parable whom the king delivered up to the torturers was of a most practical and calculating turn of mind—he was a mathematician, in fact ; but he was merciless, that was what was wrong with him. He knew how many beans make five, but he had no pity. ‘ Learn of Me ’ our Lord said, and He pointed to His Heart. He had ‘ compassion on the multitude ’ ; in other words human sentiment found an honoured place in His human nature and made His pulse beat faster ; and if He scrupled not to be moved by the hunger and exhaustion of the poor, are we playing false to Him because we allow ourselves to be touched by the distress of an animal ?

Reason must not govern with a tyrannical rule. Reason has not been given to us in order that it may stand like a sentinel at the door of our hearts,

forbidding emotion to issue out on its errands of benevolence. Sentiment can be a dithery and tottery sort of outfit, but reason has dithered and tottered in its time. The emotions need steadying and so does reason. Isolated reason is a sorry and futile sort of creature. We shall not become wise by worshipping reason alone. Goodness extends much farther than justice.

‘From the point of view of reason, it matters not whether animals be well or ill treated, because the malice of an action springs from its repugnance to reason and not to emotion.’

Thus argues a modern logician. A logician amongst the ancient pagans was equally convincing. ‘A feature of a wise man’s happiness is his indifference to the sufferings of his fellow-men.’ By a wise man he means a philosopher, no doubt ; but who would envy this philosophic felicity ? The world can ill afford to be without philosophers, but it can ill afford to be without poets. The philosopher helps to keep our mind tidy ; but he is also capable of giving us excellent ‘reasons’ for going to war, for practising contraception and for vivisectioning animals. According to the papers, Italy, at the moment, can do with more babies ; therefore, the Fascists have drawn up a programme one item in which aims at restoring ‘to healthy, natural instinct its predominance over the calculation of reason’ !

Therefore, to insist that we must approach the Animal Question without sentiment is equivalent to telling us to leave it alone. We might as well tell a young couple to approach matrimony without sentiment. We must approach life and each

department and aspect of life with every one of our faculties and capacities. We must allow life to reach us through every one of our pores. We must not be too anxious to avoid being over-human lest we become positively inhuman ; and it can hardly be denied that there is a certain *hardness* which seems to flourish on the soil of half-understood and exaggerated Christian principles. In our anxiety to maintain a *correct* attitude, we come close to acquiring a *wooden* attitude. We remain all our lives in a condition of self-torturing incompleteness. We are warped and crippled because we have persuaded ourselves that in all respects it is forbidden to let oneself go. There may be no help for this and we must sympathise with it ; but it is a pity ; it represents a failure to achieve our full-blooded development as the children of light and of liberty.

There is a right and wrong sort of self-discipline. The Scots Presbyterian who, because it was the Sabbath, refused to touch an injured rabbit suffering in a snare, himself suffered torture for the rest of the day. Here is a really humane man, sacrificing his best side for the sake of an erroneous discipline. And it is possible so to treat the heart that is in us that it becomes petrified. But if the spirit of true piety is in us, the spirit of Christ, we shall act spontaneously, with the spontaneity of sanctity, of the Saints, of St. Francis. Undoubtedly, the ' splutter ' of some Animal Welfare people is positively nauseating, but the ' splutter ' of some of their critics is also nauseating. We must keep a sharp eye on our feelings but there is no necessity to be scared to death by them.

Let us, by all means, condemn irresponsible emotion and excessive sentiment, but let us condemn with at least equal vigour the commercial selfishness that exploits the brutes and the insensibility that treats them like stocks and stones.

EXCESSES AND EXAGGERATIONS

FACED by the undeniable extremes which disfigure humanitarian movements, the orthodox enthusiast is tempted to sacrifice his enthusiasm and abandon the enterprise in despair or in disgust. Faced by these same extremes, the attitude of the *unenthusiastic* spectator of these movements is apt to harden into positive hostility. But it would be unfortunate if we refused to do anything at all about the Liquor Traffic just because some teetotallers are Manichees ; or if we became Jingoese or die-hard obstructionists through a plausible desire to avoid playing into the hands of out-and-out Pacifists or Communists. A temptation of ours is to make the negative pronouncements of religion an excuse for adopting a merely negative *attitude*. Because extreme Socialism is condemned, we are apt to conclude that a passion for social justice is unworthy of a Christian. Because Christianity has to say 'No' and say it again and again, we must not allow the impression to get abroad that Christianity says 'No' to everything.

It would certainly be unfortunate did we persuade ourselves that the most effective way of protesting against the extremes of animal-lovers is to manifest an utter indifference to the entire question of Animal Welfare.

Idealists are naturally inclined to attribute all the evil of the world to the neglect of the particular cause which they have at heart. For instance, certain Food Reformers are now maintaining that irrational feeding is the chief source of all our physical, intellectual and moral deficiencies. In a certain book we are invited to look at the correlation between religion and diet ! 'What is the greatest enemy of Christianity ? Frozen meat ! Canterbury lamb and Argentine beef enable even the poor to poison themselves into complete scepticism and despair.' There may be a grain of truth in this, but it is a frightfully sweeping statement and it is one that is not exactly calculated to ease the prejudice against vegetarians.

Another temptation is the desire to propagate our newly discovered ideal at the point of the sword. We wish to *compel* others to accept our view forgetting that we ourselves reached our present frame of mind voluntarily and without compulsion.

Again, to protest that man has been the curse of the animal kingdom is to ignore the fact that the brutes have gained and benefited to a big extent by their contacts with man. We all know what can be got out of ourselves under the influence of other people's sympathy and interest, and the animals would seem to resemble us in that respect. The difference between one cat and another is usually the difference between their respective owners. In short, we seem to have it in our power not only to perfect their natural endowments but to increase the yield, the output of their very life.

Certainly, modern humanitarianism has its accom-

paniment of errors and excesses. In some cases this results from the knack which one extreme has of begetting another. Many of the diehards defend the *status quo* by recourse to very bad arguments ; and in their desire to counteract these very extreme views, those in the opposite camp go to extreme lengths. Abuses commonly produce corrective proposals that are themselves abusive, as we have only too good reason to know. Nor must we ignore the fact that a large number of our active reformers have been deprived, through no fault of their own, of the guidance of Christian teaching, and for this misfortune of theirs allowance must be made.

Animal-lovers go to extremes no doubt. In many cases their love for the animal is only a form of self-love. Who knows what these so-called ' pets ' have to put up with at the hands of their devotees in the shape of the constant invasion of their privacy, their natural habits and appetite. They are not only killed with kindness but degraded and demoralised. America, the home of originality, has improvised the spectacle of the Barnyard Ball. The wretched animals are sprayed with scent, dressed for ' receiving ' and brought into the drawing-room. The following advertisement appeared lately in one of the more respectable of our daily papers :

Fashionable ladies ! Why not have your little dog tinted to match your dress for special occasions ? Lady has discovered process guaranteed harmless to the most delicate animal ; prettiest pastel shades imaginable.

If we consult the twenty-third chapter of the *Book of*

Numbers we shall get an idea of the reaction of the unfortunate animals to this sort of foolishness. 'Tell me if I ever did the like thing to thee. But Balaam said : Never.'

The production of the Toy Dog is little better than a perversion of nature ; and it is not difficult to discern in the Dog Show certain objectionable features. Fashionable women often transfer to the brutes their own degraded personal vanity and ostentation. It is hardly surprising if all this is found to operate as a real obstacle to Animal Welfare enterprise. At the same time it would be unjust to penalise the brutes on account of the perversions of their owners.

Again, the infatuation of many is strictly confined to the animal that happens to have found favour in their eyes.

First Lady : ' Is your husband as fond of dogs as you are ? '

Second Lady : ' Oh, yes. If another dog so much as snarls at Toodles, he half kills it.'

It is all very reminiscent of the schoolboy's essay which started off with the two propositions :

All cats are animals.

The cat next door is a beast.

Devotion to animals can be a form of idolatry ; and there is the lady who, having discovered in the *Book of Revelations* the text ' without are dogs and sorcerers,' promptly wrote to the Press to announce that she had made a present of Paradise to the priests and would gladly remain outside with little Pongo.

However, it would be manifestly absurd to exploit

such eccentricities. No doubt it would be all to the good if people took up none but useful hobbies ; but, as a rule, we take up hobbies to please ourselves and we shall probably continue to do so. After all, people *devote* themselves to chess and no one bothers ; or to flowers and we say : ‘ What a beautiful hobby.’ Some lonely old lady devotes herself to her cats and she is overwhelmed with all the Billingsgate of the moral purist. Some are criticised because they make their voluntary Animal Welfare work a whole-time job ; but even these are in far better ‘ standing ’ than those flattered and much advertised thousands whose whole-time job is amusement. It amounts to this, that the absurd things that are said do not, any more than the absurd things that are done, invalidate the claim for a true Christian understanding of the brutes.

There is hardly a system of philosophy or science that has not produced extravagant and silly notions ; but as time passes the absurdities fall away and the essential principles begin to stand out more clearly than ever. It will not do to exploit these weaknesses to the extent of saying ‘ Now we can all be as cruel as we please.’ Dean Swift tells the story of a tippler who, on being told that a certain Gospel reference to the Trinity was considered by some scholars to be an interpolation, promptly said : ‘ That means that I may drink myself to the devil and defy the parson.’ When we are confronted with arguments in favour of anything that we are out of sympathy with, we are sometimes inclined to seize upon the weak points in order that we may go on being unsympathetic in comfort.

One criticism is to the effect that Protective Societies discriminate unfairly between the rich and the poor ; that they go ' all out ' against this or that unfortunate costermonger who loses his temper with his donkey, and yet have next to nothing to say to the ' smart people ' whose hunting and shooting activities are not even supervised. Certainly, it is not easy to resist the tendency to discriminate—a tendency that infects nearly all movements and relationships. Hardly anywhere is this ingrained tendency eradicated except in the Confessional Box and at the Altar Rails—*pace*, of course, the plutocrat of the medieval legend who insisted on being communicated with one of the large-sized hosts.

In one of his satires Juvenal points out that when poor people go in for wrong-doing we cry ' shame,' but when rich people do the same they are called ' gay sparks ' and ' fine gentlemen.' Human nature is still human nature. The rich man's ' sport ' is the poor man's ' cruelty.' We are invited to execrate the vulgar cruelties and to admire the gentlemanly and lady-like ones. What a protest there would be if the East-enders took to shooting captive pigeons to while away the monotony of their enforced unemployment ! But the unemployed rich do the same thing at Monte Carlo and somehow it is supposed to be ' quite different.' Appeals are sometimes made to sections of the community to put themselves about in order to diminish unnecessary suffering. Such appeals are often responded to at considerable sacrifice in the shape of money and convenience. Other sections of the community need sacrifice nothing except their pleasure or their

vanity ; but they are not asked to do it. Sport must not be interfered with.

Faced with this intractable tendency to differentiate, the Protective Societies aim at doing what they can. They have satisfied themselves that the time is not ripe for an attack upon certain vested or strongly entrenched interests, and so they content themselves with the practical and the attainable. Piecemeal reform may be exasperating, but it is commonly all that can be attempted. The agitation on foot to have the dog exempted from the control of the vivisector is a piecemeal agitation, but it is none the less commendable on that account. The R.S.P.C.A. will prosecute anybody provided it has a good case.

And it deserves to be noted that this Society does not concentrate or rely on prosecutions. In 1937 the Society received over 30,000 complaints and prosecuted in less than 2000 cases. Its activities are mainly educational. We must be grateful for this because education is a better medium than prosecution. A certain risk attends all efforts to promote ideals by force. The necessity of force cannot be ignored, but its true function in human affairs is to give moral ideas time to take root. If the psychology of cruelty were better understood we should probably be inclined to prosecute less and less. A good deal of cruelty is thoughtless or explosive—the outcome of ‘bad nerves’ or temper or sudden impulse, a very different thing from the calculated and cold-blooded cruelty of the commercial exploiter.

We may well deprecate the expenditure that is incurred by dog fanciers and animal enthusiasts

generally : but, at the same time, fox-hunting and deer-stalking and bull-fighting are rather expensive sports—at least, they involve a biggish outlay of money. It is easy to reproach the woman who spends a few shillings in making a coat for her pet dog, but there are other women who give pounds for a hat adorned with humming-birds or egret's feathers, with the added consideration that this luxury involves suffering.

Naturally we are all disedified by the one-sidedness of certain legacies, of certain philanthropies. This one-sidedness is regrettable. But legacies are usually one-sided—at least those who are not beneficiaries think so. Even pious people may be rather one-sided in their donations or legacies. A broadcast appeal for sick animals may realise anything up to £20,000 while a subsequent appeal for sick children may barely reach the thousand-pound mark. This sort of thing is discouraging, but the Animal Welfare Societies are not to blame for it. They appeal to the general public and the general public is not always consistent.

Those who charge animal-lovers with misanthropy have usually nothing better to offer in the shape of proof than a personal feeling that it must be so. Or they seize upon some half-jesting, half-cynical remark and get all hot and bothered about it. For example, there is the lively Frenchman who said : ' The more I know of men, the more I like my dog ' ; and Robert Lynd is quoted as saying : ' Nobody likes a foreign nation as much as he likes cats—especially his own cat.' It would be rash to base the case for non-intervention in Animal Welfare upon

witty remarks of this kind. The alleged misanthropy of animal-lovers is a vague sort of generalisation which is not easy to verify.

There is Schopenhauer, of course ; but we have little reason to suppose that it was devotion to animals that made Schopenhauer a misanthrope. If we read the life of Schopenhauer, we shall soon find that the brutes had no more to do with his misanthropy than the man in the moon. In truth, the man in the moon was responsible for a good deal of Schopenhauer's troubles. He was not mad, but his cynicism was to a big extent pathological. And, as a matter of fact, this so-called misanthrope made altruism the basis of his crude philosophy. What usually happens is that those who are lonely or isolated or socially soured, try to comfort and compensate themselves with the society of some cat or dog. The cat or dog is then accused of being responsible for this isolation and this social sourness.

'It is a great pity that you cannot adopt a child instead of lavishing your attentions upon this dog of yours.' The culprit in this case was an elderly lady and the plain fact was overlooked that elderly people do not make good adopters. Children do not like the society of the elderly and the elderly are out of touch with young people. If we say that these 'doggy-folk' have no right to find consolation in a mere brute, we are up against the difficulty of explaining why it is that practically everybody does. 'It does my heart good to look at them,' said Penelope in the *Odyssey* speaking of her geese. The very Saints were not exempt from this weakness,

if weakness it be. At any rate, if they were, somebody has been playing about with their biographies.

Attendance at the meetings and perusal of the literature of humanitarian societies may very easily create an impression that the people concerned are wholly and fanatically occupied with Animal Welfare alone. The meetings and the literature—yes ; but not necessarily the minds and time of the participants.

Speaking generally, we may say that those who interest themselves in the Animal Question are likely to have an all round compassion. Those who are cruel to the brutes are likely to be no less so to their own kind. Nor must we forget that the Age of Vivisection has been likewise the Age of Social Injustice ; and Medical Science, having claimed the right to maim the bodies of the brutes and to corrupt them with disease, is now claiming the right to maim the bodies of human beings.

The majority of Animal Welfare workers are genuinely concerned for their fellow-men. They consider that the wanton abuse of our dominion over the brutes must have a very bad effect on us. It is surely a very great pity that anyone should manifest towards the lower animals a kindness and sympathy which he refuses to his suffering fellow-men ; but it is not by condoning and encouraging cruelty to animals that we are going to promote a sound social sense.

It is possible that this sort of welfare work may distract one's attention from the urgent needs of human beings, but it need not be so. It is significant

that St. Francis of Assisi, who was the uncompromising friend of the brutes, was, at the same time, the devoted servant of his fellow-men ! It is significant that Cardinal Manning, who was the uncompromising enemy of Vivisection, was also the uncompromising champion of the poor and the worker. Only the other day there appeared in a paper a notice of the death of a priest who had worked in Scotland. This is what a fellow-priest said of him :

Full of sympathy for suffering, poverty and misfortune of every kind, no forethought or inconvenience could ever stand in the way of his offering consolation or alleviation in distress. Even the dumb animals found in him a friend. The birds around his home flew to meet him when he left his house, accompanied him to the station, and were there to welcome him on his return.

After all, St. Francis preached to the birds and St. Anthony preached to the fishes : but it would be an exaggeration to read a subtle sort of misanthropy into such incidents. We need not neglect one evil in favour of another. We ought to set our faces against every form of evil. ' These things you ought to have done and not to leave those undone.'

Pope Pius X sent his blessing to all those who are working to protect from abuse and cruelty the dumb servants given to us by God. It is for us to work away under the inspiration and protection of that blessing ; to work to establish peace everywhere—peace in all relations, the relations of men to one another and to the beasts—the Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ.

ANIMAL SUFFERING

SOME philosophers and scientists have maintained that the brutes do not suffer at all—are incapable of feeling what we call pain.

Two classes of persons are tempted to take advantage of this conjecture ; one class in order to ease the conscience and the other class in order to ease the mind. Those who are actively engaged in cruelty feel the need of sheltering themselves behind *something*. This is psychologically rather significant. Even those who argue that the animals are entitled to no sort of consideration, feel the necessity of an additional excuse. But if the animals can claim no consideration from us, it is difficult to see why we need claim excuses for ourselves.

On the other hand, many make themselves positively unwell by pondering the miseries of the brute creation ; and to ease the mental torture of such the suggestion is made that, in all probability, the brutes are insensitive or very nearly so. With due respect for the motive underlying this palliative it would seem that sensitiveness to pain is bound up with the law of self-preservation, and the brutes are under the sway of this law. Pain drives them to look for food and shelter. An injured animal will seek solitude and rest in order to repair its diseased

or lacerated tissues ; and the instinct that bids it do this is begotten of pain. In a number of passages the Bible implies that the brutes are under the law of suffering ; and St. Paul speaks of the groaning and travailing in pain of *every* creature. There are, besides, the very plain injunctions and prohibitions of Holy Writ which have for their object the promotion of a humane and merciful treatment of the brutes.

Of course, when we come to ask ourselves ' Why ? ' we are up against what Cardinal Newman called a *cul-de-sac* or no-thoroughfare. It is true that good can be and is extracted from the evil of pain, just as the healing balm is extracted from the bark of the wounded tree. ' Suffering is for the stream of life what the down-slope is for our earthly rivers. It acts as a propelling power. Without pain, life would be stationary and hide-bound,' etc., etc. Nevertheless, the ultimate explanation of pain is hidden from us. It is part of the mystery of God.

In the case of the lower animals the mystery is deepened. Man suffers because he is a guilty creature and must purge himself of his guilt. But the brutes are not moral creatures and, therefore, the words ' guilt ' and ' innocence ' cannot apply to them. No doubt their solidarity with ourselves implicates them in our guilt. Man is the cause of the painful condition in which the brutes find themselves. Man shares the animal nature ; he is, in part, an animal and by his sin he has corrupted first his own particular animal nature and then, by reason of this solidarity, animal nature in general. To that big extent, therefore, the brutes are asso-

ciated with man—associated with him in his fall and consequent misery.

The mystery is deepened still further by the revelations of science according to which animals existed before the appearance of man and, therefore, before Original Sin ; and existed, moreover, in a suffering condition. To this we may say that the effects of Adam's sin were felt at the extremities of creation—that they had a retrospective character. The merits of Christ's death had a retrospective character or value. He is the Lamb slain from the foundations of the world ; and all flesh, past, present and to come, benefits by the salvation of God. This teaching regarding the all-embracing effects of the Redemption disposes us to see in the miseries of the brutes living before the Fall an effect of retroactive justice.

Besides, no Christian will be inclined altogether to ignore the devil's powers of interference with the world, both of grace and of nature. It is not difficult for the eye of the believer to detect this sinister influence in the more puzzling aspects of the problem of evil—for example, physical disease and animal suffering. This is brought out with great force and originality in Father D'Arcy's book : *The Pain of this World and the Providence of God*.

But it is very necessary to remind ourselves that the brutes do not suffer to anything like the same extent as do we, not even so much as do we in seeing them suffer. The more highly organised a creature is the greater is its sensitiveness. The lower forms of animal life appear to have very little sensitiveness. The crab does not seem to be distressed by an

injury which would acutely distress a dog or a cat. Therefore, we need not and ought not to read into the lives of the brutes our own reactions to pain. It is here that writers like Maeterlinck seem to go astray and to lead others astray. There is in Maeterlinck's book *The Life of the Bees*, a good deal of interesting information and a certain amount of very bad philosophy ; but there is a considerable over-dose of emotionalism. In his melodrama of the Massacre of the Males, the bees are brought upon the stage as though they were human performers.

They wake in pious wonder

They cannot believe their eyes

They stare amazedly around them

They are convinced that they are the victims of
some mistake

Ended for them are the days of May honey

This sort of stuff will play the very mischief with our feelings if we let it. It reminds one of :

This little piggy went to the market,

This little piggy stayed at home,

This little piggy had bread and butter,

This little piggy had none.

And this little piggy cried Squeak—Squeak.

Naturally, at this point, every right-minded baby bursts into tears. Ultra-sensitive souls reduce themselves to pulp by this sort of anthropomorphism. Even Animal Welfare people fall into the snare. 'Just think of it.' 'Put yourself in their place.' 'How would you like your little baby to be taken from you and sent to the slaughter-house ?'

Printed propaganda can do much to encourage

an emotionalism which tortures to the extent that it ignores the fact that the animal kingdom is separate and remote from ours. The brutes have much in common with ourselves ; but they are in the next field in all that relates to their apprehensions, reactions and susceptibilities.

Some allow themselves to be upset by the very sight of the animals, misled by the pathetic and pitiful look they wear. But there is something distinctly melting about the features of a negro—why, it is difficult to say ; but it is there. It is probably just the way the features happen to be arranged. But if we allow our imagination to browse over the animals, we shall drench ourselves to dripping-point with emotion. We can find pathos in the very clucking of a hen. To those who live in the country, and indulge in the two-fold luxury of lying awake at night and of allowing their imagination to go unchecked, the hooting of an owl suggests a sort of Cantor told off to chant the lamentation of the animal kingdom. Our trouble is that we are sensitive moral beings, looking out with refined and civilised eyes upon the brute creation and seeing it all the time as something human.

The slaughter of an animal is, to some extent, a revolting sight. Extreme vegetarians are fond of pointing out that if we had the killing of our own meat, few of us would be meat-eaters. But arguments of this kind based upon the squeamishness of the civilised man are largely fallacious. We must not forget that these brutes have to die in any case, and that in their natural state their death is often

anything but 'humane' from our point of view. But just as life is for us something that it most emphatically is *not* for them, so their apprehension of and reaction to death is totally different from ours. The tendency to identify ourselves with the suffering animal is well-nigh irresistible; and much of the very commendable agitation in favour of humane killing is probably inspired by an unconscious desire to relieve the feelings of the human spectator.

The sight of a dead animal is affecting; but so is the destruction of anything. A ship going to pieces on the rocks is an affecting spectacle. The wreck of man's handiwork is always pathetic. Turner's picture of *The Fighting Téméraire being towed to its Last Berth*, affects the feelings like a funeral procession. Certainly, every honest effort ought to be made to protect the brutes from the brutality of man and to secure for them a minimum of suffering; but urgent also is the necessity we are under of protecting our own minds from the mischievous onslaughts of an unbridled sensitiveness.

Alfred Russell Wallace, the scientist, maintained that the supposed torments of wild animals have little real existence, being the imagined sensations of the human spectator who puts himself in their place. The position of the spectator contemplating pain is always peculiar, and it may well be that he or she feels greater distress than the victim. When pain overtakes us, nature seems to come to the rescue in a subtle sort of way. Disease and injury have a knack of producing a sedative something-or-other corresponding to an anæsthetic. It is amazing

how accustomed we get to our aches and ailments. It is an aspect of the law of adaptation. Certainly, the brutes are mercifully exempt from our capacity for worry. They do not possess our formidable faculty of anticipating. As Father D'Arcy says : ' Death to them is no spectre at the feast, no long-feared visitant.' In their natural state there is far more happiness than pain in their lives ; and although death may come to them in a violent way, yet it is swift and merciful as a rule. They prey upon one another, but this preying produces in them a high state of tension which acts as a kind of anæsthetic. Even ferocity acts as an anæsthetic. Animals will kill one another after a fierce struggle, and the very ferocity of the struggle is a sort of merciful intoxication.

' God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb ' in more ways than one, and although the realm of suffering has in it elements that are sinister and forbidding, nevertheless the divine interference mercifully broods over it with compensations and alleviations. In the only instance where Christ our Lord was implicated in the death of a brute, He exercised His compassion. The swine were drowned swiftly and, thanks to their frenzy, probably painlessly.

We ourselves are the recipients of a like mercy. When the blood is up there is little or no feeling. Tensions and excitement distract or deaden the nerves. Whymper, in describing the famous Matterhorn disaster, says that although on his way down the slope he was bruised and bumped terribly, he felt no pain. The pain, of course, came later when he

was in safety. In one of his War Stories, H. W. Nevinston relates much the same experience. He was in a trench looking over the parapet and keyed up to concert pitch. Then came a blow like a trip-hammer falling on his skull. He had been hit and he fell like a slaughtered ox ; but there was no fear, no sensation, no pain ; and he related the incident in the hope that it might comfort the folk at home whose relations had been badly wounded or killed in the war.

There is something sustaining and invigorating in the very agitation that accompanies the first shock of trouble. It is only when the morrow comes that we begin to go through it and then we are familiarised with the shock. Those who have experienced a lot of pain will tell of the curious compensations it brings—mental and physical. Reinforcements seem to rush to the needed point much as blood rushes to a wound. Experience of the dying would seem to suggest that we face actual death with a set of feelings and ideas very different from those with which we face the *prospect* and *thought* of death. And in their natural state the brutes seem to accept their fate with a kind of numbed resignation. Even Maeterlinck admits that this is the case in the annual massacre of the males in the bee-hive. It may well be that God has provided them with some merciful psychic adjustment of which we are ignorant. The periodic suicide of the lemmings is attended by no shrinking or hesitation. Perhaps there is some subtle, psychological understanding between the victims and their destroyers—between the mouse and the cat, for example—remotely akin

to the understanding that the racing motorist (say) has come to with the possibility of disaster.

At any rate, we cannot deny that the animal creation is, on the whole and apart from man's interference, a happy creation. But the fact that we have invaded the territory of the brutes—commandeered and exploited them and, so to say, civilised them, throws upon us a big responsibility. By interfering with their wild and natural environment, we deprive them of certain defences, certain supports. It is like our responsibility to the savage peoples whose environment we interfere with. By destroying in them what, from our point of view, ought to be destroyed, we subject them to a certain helplessness and we have a big responsibility to that helplessness. It would seem, for example, that to keep a stag in captivity and then turn it out on a moor in order to hunt it, is particularly reprehensible, more reprehensible than hunting the wild animals of the jungle. Civilisation has, in a way, made death more difficult even for us. From the physical point of view, human progress has complicated the art both of living and of dying. But in their wild state the animals pay the debt to nature with docility and simplicity. The birds, for instance, seem to seek out and arrange their death-beds with the deliberation and furtivity with which they build their nests. Their nesting-places are difficult to find, but it is almost impossible to discover the places in which they hide themselves when they come to die.

Domestication certainly softens an animal; and in the case of the dog, in particular, it would seem

that close and intimate contact with us results in its being indoctrinated to some extent with our human reactions and emotions. We can hardly imagine a wild animal dying of a broken heart. It is for this reason that many of our well-meaning efforts to tidy up the animal kingdom are probably not so serviceable as we imagine. The brutes demand our consideration but in some cases the highest form of consideration is to leave them alone. Children would like to take the poor fish out of the cold water and make it happy and comfortable by the kitchen fire ; and this sort of *naïveté* is not always confined to children. The authorities at the Zoo are up against a real problem in the shape of the ungovernable urge of the visitors to feed the animals with sweetmeats and so on ; and the post-mortem examinations that are conducted point to the fact that the health of many of the specimens is injured and their life shortened by this thoughtless practice.

THE QUESTION OF COMPENSATION

VIEWING the extent and unmerited character of the sufferings of the brute creation, some find themselves toying with the idea of recompense. Dare we cherish a hope that *something* will be done for them by One whose solicitude is such that it marks the sparrow's fall? It is not merely that they are involved in the miseries of our sin, but they have played their part in man's rough and ready attempts to make atonement.

In his *Ways and Crossways* Paul Claudel speaks of the sufferings of the brutes and sees in them an effect of that obscure fraternity which links together all the creatures of the one Creator. 'The Master,' he says, 'could not suffer without all these lowly creatures suffering with Him. We feel it is for us they suffer. And who knows if this law be not a dim parable of the Communion and the Sacrifice?'

Like St. Francis of Assisi, Claudel uses the word 'fraternity' when speaking of our relationship to the brutes, and the question arises: 'Does this obscure fraternity of suffering and expiation portend *anything* in the nature of compensation?' When our Lord was on His cross the pascal lambs, skinned

and bleeding, were hanging in the doorways while the prayer of Pardon rose up :

Put thy trust, O Israel, in Jehovah.
He will bless both the little ones and the great.

Some people ask if the animals are to have any share in that blessing. They wonder if these sacrifices have any significance for the animals themselves.

In his *Sacramentary* Cardinal Schuster remarks that the Incarnation has effected an all-round consecration of nature—a consecration which, he insists, extends to the brutes. The text of Isaias is sometimes quoted : ‘ All flesh shall see the salvation of God,’ but it would be rash to give too wide an interpretation to this particular text. But elsewhere the same Prophet paints an attractive picture of the universal relief and recovery which Christ’s coming is going to bring. The mountains and hills are to sing and the trees to clap their hands ; the desolate land is going to rejoice and the wilderness to bloom like the lily. ‘ The earth and the sea, the valleys and hills shall be joyful before the face of the Lord because He cometh.’ And we may add that for hundreds of years Christians have been happy in thinking that the beasts accorded the new-born Saviour a hospitality which ungrateful men refused Him. Does all this justify our hopes ; and if so, to what extent ?

In the Old Testament we find the brutes included in the covenant that God made with Noe. ‘ Behold,’ God said to Noe, ‘ I will establish my covenant with you and with every living soul that is with you, as well in all birds as in cattle and beasts

of the earth.' This was a covenant of *preservation*. After the deluge God assured Noe that He would not again destroy the world and this assurance He extended to the brutes. God's mercy is here concerned to preserve not only men but beasts as well. 'Men and beasts Thou wilt preserve, O Lord,' as the thirty-fifth psalm says. Must we limit this 'preserving' Providence, or may we believe or at least hope that it will triumph over a death which, in the case of the lower animals, looks to us like extinction? Who knows?

Of course, the opinions of commentators differ as to the exact significance of this or that Scripture text. Cornelius à Lapide, who occupies an almost unique position amongst commentators, thus explains the text of St. Paul in the eighth chapter of *Romans*, 'For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God.'

The word 'creature' is here best taken in its proper sense (optime *creatura* hic proprie accipitur); for in verse 22 it is opposed to 'men and the sons of God,' i.e. 'And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of the body.'

Verse 20. 'For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject in hope.' In hope, that is, of liberation and a change for the better in the general resurrection and renovation of men and of all things.

Verse 21. 'Because the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.' Into liberty, that is to say, in imitation, or after the example, of the liberty of the children of God, so that other creatures may receive a similar freedom, stability, and immortality. *Into*, therefore, signifies a modal or even a final cause.

It would not do to set this particular interpretation against the general opinion of Christian scholars ; but it is perhaps permissible to accept Cornelius à Lapide where he extends to the brutes the renovation and change for the better which the lower creation owes to the coming of Christ. This is an aspect of the Animal Question concerning which we require guidance and a steadying hand ; and Christians will be prepared not only to accept the authoritative teaching on the subject but to conform their particular views to the general tradition. St. Thomas does say that on the Day of Judgement the brutes will demand vengeance against those who have treated them with cruelty ; but it is obvious that a statement of this kind must be received with caution as well as respect. It may not be more than the equivalent of ' the very walls will testify against them.' More than one serious thinker has cherished the hope of a future life for the lower animals. If they were mistaken, it only means that so much the more valuable to the brutes is this their one and only existence.

Whilst we reserve our judgement on this question, we must recognise that the brutes have received

some portion of the benefits of the Incarnation. The Sacrifice of Calvary meant for them a reprieve. In future, it was neither by the blood of goats nor of calves that satisfaction was to be made. Animal sacrifices have been ruled out of the New Dispensation.

THE SILLY SHEEP

Old Covenant Priests, your reign is o'er,
Go wash your altars that drank our gore :
For Him have we died from days of yore,
He cometh to die that we die no more.
Alleluia.

It is sometimes objected that Christians have not taken this to heart and their critics point to our practice of killing the paschal lamb. But this Easter custom of ours is just a custom and a purely symbolic one. There is no question of a sacrifice. The Roman ritual simply asks a blessing upon 'this creature of flesh which we Thy servants desire to partake of to Thy glory.' This really amounts to no more than a carrying out of St. Paul's injunction : 'Whether you eat or drink do all for the glory of God.' The paschal lamb is not associated with the Christian altar. It is clear from the Apostolic Constitutions that, in the early Church, no oblations were allowed to be offered on the altar except corn and grapes and such things. It is true that in some places it was customary to place the dead lamb near or under the altar. According to Dr. Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, in his protest against the practices of the Western Church, denounced this custom and accused the Latins of offering the lamb alongside the Body and

Blood of Christ. However, this was a baseless charge ; and it was easy to show that the liturgical blessing was made over the lamb not that it might be offered in sacrifice, but that it might be eaten with the prayer of the Church. The ritual in use among certain Canons Regular directed that during the Canon of the Mass the lamb be brought to the altar and blessed. A *Liber Sacerdotalis* printed at Venice in 1548 has a similar rubric.

These customs of associating the blessing with the Mass and the altar appear to have died out. In the ninth century the theologian, Walafrid, objected to the whole idea of blessing the paschal lamb on the grounds that it had the appearance of superstition, and might be dangerous as implying a perpetuation of the Jewish ritual. To this Cardinal Bona and others reply that the blessing is on exactly the same level as that of milk and honey and other articles of diet which are wont to be blessed and eaten at the Paschal season.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the New Dispensation knows nothing of life-taking or blood-shedding. That much, at any rate, the animals owe to Calvary. They still suffer, but suffering is no longer inflicted upon them by way of a religious rite.

THE DEBT TO CHRISTIANITY

MODERN humanitarians owe far more to Christianity than they know or are willing to acknowledge. Many of them are well outside the fold ; but, nevertheless, their high-minded ideals have flowed into them from a Christian source. They may have rejected religion but they have kept the glow and urges of religion. They refuse to have religious views but they are clinging for all they are worth to their religious *feelings*. Modern humanitarianism has not been thought out or discovered by those who are actually engaged in it. It has been produced by religious people, by spiritual people. The spirit of humanity towards the lower animals which is so active in our time is, *au fond*, a religious spirit : and it is, *au fond*, a Christian spirit because Christianity is the only religion that has anything really big to show in this matter. The Higher Criticism does not diminish the humanitarian value of the host of stories that has grown up around the lives of Catholic Saints. Miss Helen Waddell has given us but a few of these in her admirable *Beasts and Saints* ; and, apart from the incidents themselves, one feels that the spirit of Christ hovers over the entire narrative. The dossier collected by the Marquise de Rambures and published in 1899 under the title *L'Eglise et la pitié envers les animaux*, is mainly

taken up with fully documented examples of the same kind.

Pope Pius X gratefully accepted a copy of this book and Archbishop Bagshawe said of it that it rightly represented the spirit of the Catholic Church regarding our relations with animals.

We do well to emphasise the example of our Saints because our religion must be judged by its superior members and not by its inferior ones. It is wrong to minimise the importance of these stories and legends concerning the Saints and Animals. They are very important because they are very significant. They are significant in this sense that no other religion can show the like. Christianity practically enjoys the monopoly of these facts ; and even if many of the facts are only legends, that is more significant still. They show what was in the hearts of those who invented the legends, how receptive were the minds of contemporaries. They testify to the high-mindedness of a public opinion which credited the Saints with such feelings and actions.

These incidents were inspired by the genius of the Christian religion. They represent the Christian ethos ; and they are important because they have contributed enormously to the development in our civilisation of a spirit of pity and compassion for the brutes. St. Francis of Assisi has been of first-rate value in this matter ; and the Church in canonizing him has set her approval on the Franciscan spirit which for God's love treats all creatures with affection and kindness. Unfortunately, Catholic countries have, in our time, a bad name for cruelty

or indifference. A calm and impartial investigation of the facts is well worth while in the interests of justice. Someone says that the Englishman's vaunted superiority over his neighbours in the matter of truthfulness only means that he does not tell the same kind of lie ; and each country has its own pet cruelties. But in judging Catholic lands it is manifestly unfair to ignore the striking contributions they have made to the good cause in the shape of the example and legends of their Saints. St. Francis was an Italian ; and Spain has given us the farmer St. Isidore, the protector of birds, and St. Rose, the protector of the mosquito.

And in all sorts of other ways—ways more subtle and less striking—Christianity has contrived to throw the mantle of its appreciation and protection over the animals. The conjectural association of the ox and ass with our Saviour's birth has been of very great consequence.

THE FOOLISH ASS

Manger of mine Lord Christ shall share,
For whom my masters no room can spare :
And foal of an ass my King shall bear,
When He to Salem in pomp shall fare.
Alleluia.

THE PATIENT OX

Come prick o' the goad, come blow o' the fist,
Yea, butchering axe will I not resist :
Lips of our Lord have my dew-lap kissed,
And I figure His Third Evangelist.
Alleluia.

In fact, we can imagine all the ill-used donkeys of the world saying, with Chesterton's donkey,

Fools ! for I also had my hour,
One far fierce hour and sweet ;
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

The actions and opinions of individual Christians are the actions and opinions of individual Christians ; but we must not fall into the common temptation of lumping every mortal thing that this or that Christian says or does under the name of Christianity. ' There's Christianity for you,' people say ; but that will not do.

Cardinal Manning called Vivisection a superstition. He said that vivisectionists were the most superstitious men on earth. We know what Christianity thinks of superstition. Its influence has always been at work in putting down superstitions, especially those that involve cruelty. It was thanks to it that the superstitious immolating of animals which prevailed throughout Europe was gradually eliminated. It was only in the reign of Louis XIV that the custom of burning cages of foxes, wolves and cats was suppressed. It was a slow business, but that sort of reformation is always slow. This wretched practice survived in Scotland until modern times. In 1859, in the Isle of Man, a heifer was burnt alive as a superstition. It took a long time to suppress the *Kattefeest* or Feast of Cats, an ancient custom which consisted of throwing live cats from the belfry of Ypres.

The cock has been particularly unfortunate in this respect. In ancient times it was sacrificed to Asclepius, the god of Medicine, and even to-day in Africa the natives sacrifice it to Fusie, the Earth-god,

in order to obtain cures. It is thought that this has something to do with the age-long belief that evil spirits always depart at cock-crow. The early Christians 'baptised' this superstition and assigned to the cock the duty of giving the signal not only for the Resurrection, but also for the General Judgement. There is something very attractive about this sort of ingenuity. Here we have the Church going to work in an underhand or, at any rate, roundabout way in order to take the animal kingdom under her protection.

At one time in the Highlands of Scotland, the farmers used to cut the meat that they required in an emergency from the living animal. They could not afford to kill the beast, so they just took as much meat as they wanted and left the animal to recover. In Italy this practice also existed here and there, and St. Francis had to deal with it in the case of the pig's trotter. In Anson's *Voyage Round the World*, the author says that in South America formerly the natives had done this as a matter of course, and he adds that it was due to the preachings and threatenings of the friars that the custom was stamped out.

It would take a very long time to enumerate the alleviations which the animals owe to the planting of Christ's spirit in human hearts. Besides the wonderful contacts of Beasts and Saints, there is the symbolism of the early Church in which animals figured so prominently—the fish, the cock, the dove, the lamb and so on. The biological detail in the *Exultet* of Holy Saturday may not be strictly scientific, but certainly 'no more beautiful song has ever been chanted in honour of the bees.' And there is the

religious art of the Middle Ages. A goodly volume might be written and illustrated on the subject of Animals in Christian Art. Lecky, the rationalist, says that this art represents one of the most striking efforts to inculcate a feeling of kindness and pity for animals.

It is not suggested that pity for the brutes only came into the world with the coming of Christ. At no period of history has man been altogether without some compassion for the brutes ; and at no period of history has man been without some concern for their problem. Marcus Aurelius has two excellent precepts on the subject. The Emperor Julian, the Apostate, forbade the pagan priests to attend hunts and the circus shows in which animals were killed for sport. In this, as in so much else, he was simply borrowing the legislation of the Church. Plutarch has a small treatise *On the Eating of Flesh*, and Porphyry tells us that those who were to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries were obliged to renounce flesh-meat.

Hesiod, in his *Work and Days*, recommends kindness to the dog and the ox, but not for humanitarian reasons. This applies also to the wise counsels on the care of the farm-stock which are to be found in Virgil's *Georgics* and in the agricultural treatises of Cato and Varro. And so too, Grattius—one of the minor Latin poets—has much excellent advice to give on the care of dogs and horses, but he is writing from the point of view of the hunter. The story of Androcles and the Lion is an attractive story, but it is a solitary and lonely looking example. Statius, the poet, has an elegy on the death of a parrot and

another on the death of a tame lion, and both these poems are very humane and touching. Bucephalus, the horse of Alexander the Great, was given a public funeral and a monument, and the same Alexander is said to have founded a city called Peritas in memory of a favourite dog of that name. The dog belonging to Xanthippus, the father of Pericles, which swam alongside his master's galley to Salamis, was buried on a promontory known as Cynosema or *Dog's Grave*. The Greek Anthology contains several epitaphs on dogs showing the affection with which they were regarded. One of these is attributed to the famous Simonides.

Recent excavation brought to light the tomb and monument of a dog which was the bodyguard of an Egyptian king. The date is about 2600 B.C. The animal was buried ceremonially in a tomb of its own, after its natural death, in order that its spirit might enter the after-life as an honoured guest of the god Anubis.

In his *Life of Salon*, Plutarch remarks that 'there are those who at the death of dogs and horses have been plunged into shameful and intolerable grief,' which proves that the pagans were not made of stone. Pythagoras and Empedocles declared that the same principles of justice apply to all living creatures; and they insisted that inevitable punishment threatens those who harm a brute beast. In his *Republic* Cicero characterises cruelty to animals as a crime, and then there comes a tantalising gap in the manuscript. Not the least touching of the many passages in Homer is the simple account of the dog who died of joy at his master's return.

Argos, the hound of Odysseus, raised his head and pricked up his ears. In days past the young men were wont to take him to the hunt, but latterly he had lain neglected—his master gone—and full of vermin. Yet, when he marked Odysseus standing near, he wagged his tail and dropped both his ears, but nearer to his master he no longer had strength to move. Then Odysseus looked aside and wiped away a tear. But as for Argos, death seized him when he had seen Odysseus in the twentieth year.

As for the exhibitions in which animals were slaughtered, it was Theodosius who put a stop to these, and we may note that he did so with the full approval of the Church. But it would be a mistake to suppose that these degrading spectacles excited no unfavourable comments. In one of his letters Cicero wonders what possible pleasure a man of refinement can get out of seeing an animal pierced with a hunting spear. The entertainment of the amphitheatre was not derived solely from the fascination of cruelty and bloodshed. The combats were the occasion for a display of skill no less than for the contemplation of butchery ; and no doubt, some satisfaction was derived from witnessing the activities and habits of so many strange beasts. When Pompey, in the games of 55 B.C., produced his surprise in the shape of twenty African elephants the spectators were impressed : but when he set the gladiators to kill them, the audience rose and cursed him for his cruelty. Cicero, who was present, tells us that he found himself worried and wondering if,

after all, 'this huge beast had not some sort of fellowship with the human race.'

But after all, little can be gleaned from antiquity on the humanitarian side save a few haphazard words dropped by chance from the lips of a philosopher here and there. In general, the brutes were exploited in the Roman Empire callously and without scruple and exploited to decorate the cheap magnificence of a decadent officialdom. Against all this we have in Christianity centuries of symbolism, art, example and exhortation, testifying to the profound effect which the Incarnation has had upon our attitude to the brute creation.

A medieval painting of the Annunciation represents nature as being on the alert and already beginning to take heart : the trees are bursting into bloom and the verge outside the house is carpeted with spring flowers : the birds are excited. The artist would suggest that the 'be it done unto me according to Thy word' of our Blessed Lady is going to make a big difference all round. Henceforward everything that lives will be entitled to live in a better and happier way. Christians, unfortunately, do not always show a practical appreciation of the responsible and sacred legacy which is theirs ; but to the extent in which they do, they are the servants of their Lord and the disciples of their Master.

The path of humanitarians is, to some extent, a thorny path on which they must walk warily and with circumspection. And it is, to some extent, a lonely path. Generous ideals and high emotions are, by their very nature, isolated and lonely. But

there can be no undue isolation and loneliness about the Christian humanitarian. Christianity allows nothing in the shape of human wisdom to intervene between the soul and its genuinely inspired ideals. And Christians may well look for inspiration to their own authentic traditions, and base their appeal for a better appreciation of God's dumb creatures on the consistent teaching of their religion from the beginning.

EXPLOITATION

REFORMERS must be armed with something more substantial than their merely temperamental dislikes. It is easy enough to get worked up into a state of chronic irritation—to go round ‘just boiling all over.’ This sort of animal enthusiast will react violently to everything in the shape of a human contact or human interference with the brutes. Customs and habits, even the most innocuous, are cast headlong into the melting-pot of his zeal—the harness of the horse and the yoke of the ox ; the collar round the neck of the dog and the ribbon round the neck of the cat ; Pongo who is taught to beg for his bone, and the performing flea that is taught to break high-jumping records, etc., etc.

Enterprises like the menagerie, the zoo and the circus are a source of genuine distress to many sensitive and intelligent people. But as long as our civilisation insists on having these things, we can only support the efforts that are made to have them supervised, and, after that, look around for consolations. It is practically certain that the animals have gained as well as lost something by these exhibitions, which surely have a distinct value in educating the public in the matter of sympathy, understanding and humanity. The performing animal is usually well-cared for ; it is trained by humane methods

and it certainly does escape the boredom from which certain animals seem to suffer. In a way it is painful to see any wild animal condemned to captivity, deprived of the companionship of its own kind, shut up in a cage. We remember St. Philip Neri's strong aversion to the caging of birds. But, at any rate, the interest and diversion created by the process of training would seem to offer some sort of alleviation to the captive beast—at least a temporary forgetfulness of and reconciliation to its confinement.

The best systems of training accept as their basis the natural instincts and habits of the animals ; for example, the lion is taught to jump, the bear to climb and so on. It is impossible to witness a sheep-dog trial without feeling that the chief actor is enjoying itself immensely. Coercion is, of course, inevitable ; but we have no reason to think that the brutes are less amenable to coercion than are we ourselves.

To keep a watchdog or a canary is an act of exploitation. To exploit means to utilise—to make this or that subserve our needs or interests : and from the beginning man has exploited the brutes in this sense. Of late, however, the word exploitation has acquired a sinister significance, has come to represent a selfish and ruthless utilisation which disregards the canons of decency or right or justice : and it is this form of exploitation which exercises the minds of Animal Welfare workers as it does the minds of Social Reformers and Humanitarians generally.

There are those who say that this exploitation has

come to stay, that it is so deeply entrenched that it is quite useless to attempt to dislodge it. Certainly the domination of our society by those whose outlook is poisoned by an extreme utilitarian philosophy would seem to be almost complete. We are practically overwhelmed by the barbarians who have not descended upon us from the East or the North, but have grown up in our midst in the guise of a ruthless commercialism which respects nothing and insists upon dragging everything down to the level of its own interests. 'What a waste of space! What a background for displaying "Simpkins' Synthetic Soups"!'—this is said to have been a Big Business man's reaction to his first view of some rock or other—possibly the Rock of Gibraltar.

The enraptured Poet : 'Look at that sea and that sunset!'

The practical Industrialist : 'What's the good of them. You can't put the blessed things on the market!'

When the activities of this type of man—who is at the moment a very representative type of man—are directed to the animal kingdom they not only constitute a threat to the very existence of certain species whose extermination is undesirable, but they are often accompanied by very great cruelties. The trapping industry, for example, would seem to be particularly reprehensible in this respect.

'Once a species is gone, it is gone for ever.' This fact is calculated to make all right-minded people pause. The last of the passenger pigeons died in captivity at the beginning of the present century;

but less than one hundred years ago they existed in inconceivable numbers, and a single flock that came under observation was calculated to contain some two thousand million birds.

Among living things that are in danger of extinction through the demands of commerce are the brilliant blue butterflies that are being slaughtered to meet the craze for butterfly jewellery. Pythons, boas and lizards are being killed off to provide ties for men and shoes for women.

The commercial man excuses himself by invoking the inexorable law of Supply and Demand ; and it cannot be denied that if plumages and furs were not coveted there would be no traffic in these commodities. At the same time, the law of Supply and Demand does not operate, in our time, with anything like spontaneity. Nowadays, commercial enterprise largely consists in an intensive effort to stir up an abnormal craving, to create artificial needs and fictitious necessities. The commercial exploiter of animals is seldom catering for a genuine human need. In many cases he is pandering to some of the worst qualities of our fallen human nature—to our luxury, our pride, our love of ostentation. And, of course, he can always count upon ‘the sadistic ruthlessness of the woman who tastes to the point of intoxication the heady liquor of her own vanity.’

At the same time, it would be grossly unfair to condemn all those who happen to be wearing fur coats, or to suggest that they are tainted with ‘the sadistic ruthlessness’ referred to above. It is true that sheep are beaten with iron rods to induce premature labour so that the woman who can

afford it may enjoy the comfort of the soft fleece of the lamb that is born. But here we are up against the formidable custom of accepting what comes along without asking any questions.

The production of an expensive and unwholesome delicacy like *pâté de foie gras* involves cruelty of a very loathsome kind. There is, besides, the desire to make as much money as possible in the quickest possible way ; and hence we have heated chambers in which the hens are incarcerated and condemned to a ceaseless round of egg-laying. It is difficult to believe that healthy eggs can be produced by so unnatural a process, and this discovery may yet check the practice.

IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE

TO engage in a criticism of Vivisection is to enter upon a somewhat thorny path. To begin with, we risk exposing ourselves to the charge of being anti-social maniacs who have at heart the interests of brutes rather than the interests of man. The reflection that almost innumerable human lives have been and are being saved, lengthened and relieved thanks to the knowledge which experiments on animals provide, is calculated to make one pause. Animal Welfare people are up against an additional drawback or vexation or hesitation derived from the fact that sick and suffering animals have benefited and do benefit by these practices.

Admittedly, the realisation that these experiments are going on is a real disturbance and even torment to many minds. Indeed, one aspect of the enormous problem of the animal world is just the curious fact that its sufferings seem to upset us in a way in which the sufferings of our own species do not. It would be interesting to know exactly why this is so—why exactly our emotions receive a special and peculiar sort of twinge when we see a dog being run over in the street, and why a similar accident overtaking a human being does not move us in quite the same fashion. It may possibly be because

we are unable to identify ourselves with the brutes—to put ourselves in their place—to appropriate their experience, so to say. In the case of a human being we are supported by the impression or conviction that accidents are not so grievous, not so intolerable to the victim as they look to the spectator. In the case of a brute this consolation does not seem to be forthcoming. Or it may be that an injury inflicted upon a naked body affects our imagination more than an injury inflicted upon a body that is clothed, apart altogether from the strangely *pathetic appeal* of the animal.

Certainly there is such a thing as a headstrong and irresponsible criticism of Vivisection begotten of hasty and ill-conceived generalisations. Cardinal Manning could not understand any civilised man countenancing Vivisection: but the undeniable fact remains that Vivisection is countenanced by civilised and God-fearing men. It would be difficult to exaggerate the debt which the whole cause of humanitarianism owes to the zeal and energy of Cardinal Manning; but some allowance must be made for the absolutist mould in which his mind was cast. Having adopted an attitude to a given question, he sometimes found it difficult to realise that anything at all could possibly be said in favour of a different attitude.

A propaganda which represents the experimenters as fiends in human shape who are revelling in their atrocities is unconvincing. We ought not to assume that these scientists are utterly devoid of humanity, or that they abuse the powers that are entrusted to them by the law, even though—as has

been publicly stated—some practitioners strongly resent being controlled by law.

If the truth were but known, there are probably few who feel altogether comfortable about this experimentation even though they may be engaged in it. Its strongest advocates regret the necessity that has produced it ; and the hard-boiled type of person who says : ‘ After all, the brutes are for our use and what better use could we put them to ? ’ is becoming rarer every day. This is perhaps the most hopeful sign and the happiest augury for the future. When customs begin to produce discomfort and regret they are generally in a fair way to being eliminated.

However, in fairness to the scientific exploiter of the animals it must be recognised that he is claiming a high-minded excuse. Admittedly the disease and ill-health of the modern man is something in the nature of a scandal of which he ought to be ashamed. Speaking in a general way and taking a large view of the subject, it may be said that we are, to a very great extent, responsible for the unhealthy condition in which we find ourselves. The virtue of temperance is not exactly a popular virtue at the moment. Statesmen and governments are now beginning seriously to concern themselves about our eating habits. Brillat Savarin remarked that whereas beasts *feed*, the man of intellect *eats*. It would not do to take this witty gastronome too seriously ; and it is evident from the world-wide agitation regarding nutrition that is on foot, that the man of intellect is still a little backward in the elementary matter of his own diet.

The critics of Vivisection, pointing to all this, ask

why the brutes should have to pay the penalty of our refusal to put our house in order ; why cats and dogs should be painfully exploited in order to find a cure for those who deliberately injure themselves with bad food, alcohol, tobacco, and general excess. The vivisectionist justifies himself by the plea that we are face to face with the uncontrollable forces of nature and must do something about it ; but that is just the point in dispute. Are these forces of nature really uncontrollable ?

The critics of Vivisection assert that medical science has to a big extent become a system of mere quackery ; that it has fallen into the very snare it is so eager to keep the public out of ; that it offers us handy sedatives in the shape of drugs and so on, and, by its concentration on this sort of practice, takes away from man the need of that self-restraint and self-discipline without which health is impossible. They consider that Vivisection has hindered rather than helped, and that if medical science would only stop torturing the animals and devote itself to giving people some advice as to how to live and to eat, etc., the general health would improve. In their opinion it is not the bodies of these living animals that ought to be cut open and analysed, but our own bad habits. They accuse medical science of allowing itself to be distracted from its real business. It is only of late that medical men have had a word to say about bad housing and bad feeding and kindred evils, and their angry critics assert that they (the medical men) have been too busy prowling about among the viscera and nerve-centres of guinea-pigs to be able to spare a thought

for the social evils that are producing at least fifty per cent of our disease.

A leading exponent of experiments on animals declared at the 1937 meeting of the British Association that the health of the community depended on the practice of Vivisection. While this sort of authoritative pronouncement is calculated to confirm the worst suspicions of the anti-vivisectionists, one need not be an anti-vivisectionist in order to feel genuinely disturbed by it. Modern medical science is accused of taking far too little account of what is called *The Therapy of Ordered Living*, but this pronouncement would seem to reject it altogether. There is something radically wrong with a civilisation which depends for its health upon crude experimentation rather than upon the keeping of the obvious, if irksome, laws of nature. The modern civilised man, apparently, insists upon being healthy and upon breaking nature's laws at the same time ; and some would say that that has no right to call itself a Science which sets out to aid and abet him in his delusion.

And all this only goes to prove that both sides are well within their rights in working for all they are worth at the task of influencing public opinion.

Indeed, it is not without significance that the vivisectionists themselves now more or less consent to submit the matter to the decision of public opinion. This is something which formerly they were in no mind for doing. 'When the public realised,' said Dr. E. P. Poulton, on the occasion referred to above, 'that their health depended upon the routine practice of vivisection, they would never agree to its abolition,

though they might if it was used only for experimental research.'

The latter part of this quotation which we have placed in italics deserves particular attention, an attention which it will doubtless receive from the opponents of Vivisection. It amounts to an admission that the scientist is at last compelled to reckon with public opinion ; and it almost amounts to the further admission that the public is in no mood for tolerating experiments on animals engaged in for the mere sake of the experiments. Evidently the day is passed or is passing when the scientist may safely claim the right to penetrate the secrets of nature by any or every means.

Dr. E. P. Poulton argued from the fact that all the scientific workers in the department of Messrs. Boots Limited held Vivisection licences, that the fight for Vivisection had been won. A remark of this sort is not so comforting as it is intended to be. It would seem to suggest that Vivisection is practised primarily in the interests of the drug manufacturers—is a kind of short cut which the manufacturing druggist, like every manufacturer, will not readily consent to have closed against him. Yet it is permissible to doubt whether the provision of cheap and effective medicines is the whole *raison d'être* of medical science. It is permissible to doubt whether the science of medicine is flourishing amongst us just because the country is covered from end to end by a chain of popular drug stores. It would be a pity if medical science should turn out to be more interested in disease than in health.

As to the contention that the fight for Vivisection

has been won, the scientist ought to be the last person to regard any practice, however strongly entrenched in public recognition and acceptance, as representing the high-water mark of scientific development. In the battle of progress many a flag has been hoisted triumphantly over positions which have had to be abandoned sooner or later.

Science owes many of its most valuable developments to the influence of theories which proved to be false but which nevertheless led on to the truth. Scientific discoveries do not spring full-fledged and complete from the brain of the scientist, much as a certain mythological personage sprang from the brain of Zeus. Scientific discoveries are slowly built up and they are painfully built up—painfully because they are, in part, derived from the humiliation of failure. The archives of Science are crowded to bursting with theories and practices which have been abandoned simply because they have not stood the test of experience. And yet, every one of these abandoned theories and practices was based upon *some* recognised fact or truth.

Moreover, Science dare not keep itself in a watertight compartment. It dare not isolate itself from the *general* wisdom. It stands to lose if it does so, because its activities are promoted by means of the contribution derived both from concrete facts and the opinions of other people. In so far, therefore, as the vivisector will not listen to or take any account of views other than those of vivisectors like himself, he is unscientific. Most people would probably admit that Vivisection has no right to exist for a moment longer than is absolutely necessary. But

if the vivisector shuts himself up in a world of his own and steadily refuses to examine the theories of people like Food Reformers, his mentality will tend to be that of the witch doctor who regards the intrusion of hygiene into the tribe as a threat to his own position.

The unpleasant truth is that we have drifted—some would say that we have been steered—into a condition of self-delusion, and we shall not escape until we set before ourselves rational standards of human normality and make an effort to rear our children up to them. The most urgent of all health reforms is the drastic re-education of public opinion. Our present stage is one of pathetic frustration. The problem of health will have to be tackled from a new angle, and the genuine Nature Cure specialist recognised for what he is—an exponent of rational medicine. Positive health must be sought for in the place of negative or scientific health which is not really health at all ; and if preoccupation with his experiments is blinding the Vivisectionist to the urgent necessity of this change-over, then there is something to be said for the charge that he is attached to these experiments for their own sake.

The critics further maintain that what will kill Vivisection is the growing certainty that nearly all that the vivisector claims to discover by means of his experiments can be discovered in other ways. For example, it was lately revealed that some scientist by means of experiments on rats had *discovered* that commercial white bread produces stomach disorders. We must, of course, reverence the child-like Doctor-Strabismus sort of innocence of this experi-

menter ; but food reformers, without any help from Vivisection, have been warning the public against the commercial white loaf for years.

So far the critics. We may dissent from their criticisms. We may feel and say that they are unbalanced, illogical and far-fetched : but what we have no right to say is that a Christian is debarred from criticising Vivisection and kindred experiments or from working to have them stopped.

Certainly, we have not disposed of the question by a mere appeal to the loathing we have for it in our bones. We are all bound to exercise some distrust where these bones of ours are concerned—animal enthusiasts, perhaps, more than any. On the other hand, the question is not to be disposed of by means of the mere invocation of the name of Science. There is an ungovernable, a ruthless element in modern Science as in Capitalism and Big Business. The latter say ‘ make money—honestly if you can, but make it ’ : the former says : ‘ make discoveries—honestly if you can, but make them.’

The specialist is, potentially at any rate, a bore ; and he is, potentially, a danger. The narrow man is made by the degree of his immersion in a single subject. He concentrates upon what lies under his nose and naturally he ends by not being able to see anything that lies beyond his nose. Medical Science takes for its province the physical nature of man, and modern medicine has limited itself even further by concentrating upon the diseases of man. The temptation is to maintain the proposition : ‘ All that subserves the end I have in view must be accounted good and lawful.’ But this is the fallacy

of the specialist ; and this may yet be found to have been the fallacy of the Vivisectionist. Perhaps he has mistaken expediency for right. The man wholly possessed by a scientific idea will, if he is not careful, be blind to everything except his scientific idea. He will claim the right to torture in order to discover things. Science has been and is still in some measure godless; and Vivisection may be a manifestation of that godlessness. The utilitarian exclusiveness upon which modern Science prides itself is, in reality, one of its most objectionable features. Experimental Science can attach an absolute value to itself ; and in so far as it clamours for complete liberty of action, it differs not at all from a Communistic mob howling for absolute equality.

The loss of a due reverence for nature can overtake Science as well as Art. Karl Pfleger speaks of the cannibalistic maw of a science diabolically proud and respecting nothing except its own unhealthy appetite. It is possible for Science to regard the secrets of nature as of more account than the revelation of God, and to set about forcing everything back into the natural order. Hence, some critics of Vivisection say that it stands related to Science as dadaism, gagaism, cubism and surrealism stand related to Art. The latter mark the decomposition of Art and the former stands for the decomposition of Science. Science and Art can contaminate nature ; and some consider that the deliberate infecting of the brutes with our diseases is little short of a scientific contamination of nature.

At the same time, we cannot ignore actualities

and the very real problem which the medical scientist has on his hands. It is a big problem. The civilised man is a diseased and unhealthy man. He can hardly help being so as things are : and the doctors have to do something about it. They cannot possibly ask their patients to change *all* their habits ; and the patients are not always prepared to change even the bad habits which lie in their power.

‘ Too much smoking the night before. A hot, dry throat and a tight band round your head next morning and your digestion thoroughly upset. . . . Will you smoke less in future? No, you won’t. Then you really ought to learn the infallible way to banish “ smoker’s hangover.” ’

Faced with this widespread perversity, the medical scientist has to seek for alleviations. The ordinary practitioner has to try to patch up the patient by means of drugs and operations. This may be tackling the matter at the wrong end, but it is difficult to avoid it. To a big extent medical science has to make the best of a bad business. We cannot deny that poison gas is a bad business. Animals are used to try out the effects of this or that anti-gas expedient. The distressfulness of such experiments would seem, however, to be just an unavoidable concomitant of the failure of our Christian civilisation as exemplified by the invention and use of poison gas. Evil breeds evil ; and the carrying out of a wrong course of conduct commits one to all sorts of incidental wrongs, just as the thief is practically compelled to become a liar.

Few will be tempted to pour scorn upon an honourable profession with so proud a record of

public service and containing, as it does, so high a percentage of conscientious men. At the same time, the medical profession, like every other, is called upon to examine its conscience at regular intervals, and some of its greatest admirers are of opinion that its Council of Trent is a little overdue. We may not, perhaps, agree with those who regard Vivisection as a blind and irrational approach to the problem of bad health ; but, all the same, an opinion is steadily growing up amongst medical men themselves to the effect that the current and stereotyped approach to the problem of bad health stands in need of a drastic overhaul.

It is said that annually over half a million experiments are conducted on living animals. This may be so or not, and, in any case, many of the experiments are probably slight. However, since a change is as good as a rest, it might be advantageous all round if the vivisectionists were to leave the animals alone for twelve months and conduct half a million experiments on, say, our popular advertisers, feeding them with continuous doses of their own products and making the results known. For example, we are being constantly exhorted to ' Take So-and-so's Magnesia and Eat what you please.'—including, presumably, broken glass. The manufacturer might be fed with broken glass plus his own magnesia and then kept under observation.

At any rate, we are certainly not obliged to regard Vivisection as a closed question, a sort of no thoroughfare in which we have no business to intrude. The vivisectionist naturally resents criticism. We all resent the criticism of a thing which we are doing.

The President of the Physiological Section of the British Association, on the occasion of the 1937 meeting, seemed to regret that scientific men should have to devote so much valuable time to countering the agitation of the anti-vivisectionists. But it is surely obvious that a scientific activity of this kind must rouse opposition and must, in the long run, be judged by the tribunal of public opinion. No doubt, Vivisection has a strong case ; but its opponents are convinced that they also have a strong case. It would be unfortunate if only one side were to be allowed to state its case.

The vivisectionists complain that the public has only a vague idea of what Vivisection really is and of how its practice has altered in recent years. They accuse the anti-vivisectionists of exploiting the ignorant sentimentality of the community. The anti-vivisectionists, on the other side, make the same charge against the public. They say that the public opinion that accepts Vivisection is uneducated ; that a great number, even of doctors, accept it only in the sense that they do not reject it ; that the so-called consensus of opinion in favour of Vivisection is just one more of those vague diffusions of unthinking acquiescence with which we are all familiar. People say : ‘ Your Anti-Vivisection Society has a few thousand members, but what are these against the millions of Britishers who do not belong to it ? ’

There is no intrinsic reason why Vivisection should not yet be suppressed, just as were slavery, body-snatching, judicial torture and the burning of witches. In the meantime we have a perfect right

to put the thing in the witness-box, to cross-examine it, to question its premises and its conclusions. Otherwise, it must harden into a mere vested interest.

And, in fact, Vivisection itself has had to submit to the law of progress. In pre-Christian times human beings were vivisected and the anatomists of the sixteenth century were accused of similar practices : but we have outgrown that sort of thing and there is no reason why we should not outgrow our modified form of Vivisection. The great vivisector, Wersheim, poured turpentine on twenty-five dogs and then roasted them alive. No one would tolerate the experiments conducted in the beginning of the movement : and why should we refuse to visualize the possibility of a future generation renouncing the whole business ?

Already there is a fairly strong reaction at work against the practice of infecting the animals with our diseases. The actual law of this country restricts the activities of the vivisector by requiring that an anæsthetic be given during a serious cutting operation. At the same time it ought to be said that, after mutilating the animal, the vivisector is allowed to bring it back to consciousness. A licence to operate without an anæsthetic may be granted by the Home Office and an animal may be infected with tetanus or cancer without an anæsthetic. What is evident is that the palmy days of the experimenter are over. He is no longer allowed to run wild or to rely upon his mere *ipse dixit*.

Vivisection is identified with a very high-minded profession ; but this profession is subject to a certain

evolution and in the course of its development it has been associated with what we now regard as barbarities. By an Act passed in the reign of George II, it was provided that 'for the better prevention of murder some further terror and peculiar mark of infamy be added to the punishment of death—the bodies to be given to the Surgeons' Company for dissection.' How seriously this degradation was regarded is illustrated by an advertisement published by William Smith who was executed in 1750. In this advertisement he entreated contributions for his decent interment, so that 'his poor body might not fall into the hands of surgeons and perpetuate the disgrace of his family.'

The realities behind this request may be gathered from a note made by Fielding after he had witnessed an execution. 'As soon as the poor creatures were half dead,' he wrote, 'I was much surprised, before such a number of peace officers, to see the populace fall to hauling and pulling the carcasses with so much earnestness as to occasion several warm encounters and broken heads. These, I was told, were the friends and the persons sent by private surgeons to obtain bodies for dissection. The contests between these were fierce and bloody and frightful to look at, so that I made the best of my way out of the crowd.' In this very elementary matter of humanity and decency the 'ignorant mob' showed itself superior-minded to the private surgeons.

Cardinal Manning refused to believe that the revelation of the healing art is going to come in the furrow of the suffering which Vivisection inflicts on

animals. The vivisector regards himself as a benefactor of humanity ; but so did the witch-burner and the body-snatcher. Vivisection is able to show that, thanks to it, the physical situation has been eased. The question arises, may humanity be benefited at any and every cost ?

It is easy enough to compile a formidable list of the advantageous discoveries which have resulted from it ; and there are, of course, plenty of intelligent and high-minded Christians to whom arguments based on 'formidable lists of advantages' will appeal. But, on the other hand, there are plenty of intelligent and high-minded Christians to whom arguments based upon imposing lists of advantages will not appeal. Very great advantages have indirectly accrued to the human race through the employment of questionable means ; and, as things are in our disordered world, the weapons of evil have to be lifted against evil ; but nevertheless, the dictum of the Gospel about 'overcoming evil by good' cannot be altogether ignored. An easy and complacent resignation to the use of realistic means in pursuance of a just end is a mentality fraught with some peril to Christians ; nor are they altogether safeguarded from this peril just because they are able to fall back upon solid consolations in the shape of this or that gain.

All honour to Science when it engages in the warfare against physical evil ; but the Christian is tempted to believe that in every battle against evil good will win through to final victory only if and when it uses its own weapons. The Christian is inclined to think that in this, as in the other matters,

it may be a tactical blunder to go combating evil with the weapons of evil. In presence of an urgent situation our natural impulse is to seek the short cut and satisfy the demand for a quick solution. We can hardly deny that doubtful and questionable expedients have to be resorted to in emergencies ; but it would be unfortunate did this exception harden into a fixed rule.

PAGAN SURVIVALS

IN his book, *A Reading of Life*, J. R. Lysaght says : 'I have been a supporter of fox-hunting all my life but, nevertheless, I can make no attempt to defend it.' Faced with criticism, the blood sportsman either tells us not to be silly, or he points to the thrills and to the fine qualities of courage and so on which emerge from the practice. Much the same excuse might be made for war and, doubtless, burglary sharpens certain instincts and faculties. After all, the Spartan youths were encouraged to steal with a view to developing their sense of cunning and general alertness. The truth is that blood sports are usually taken for granted, like our dividends and our wealth and our luxuries, without any question being asked as to their origin and history and actual implications.

The author of *The Natural History of Selborne* is inclined to think that we are sportsmen by constitution and that the predatory instinct is so strong in us that the hunting fraternity had better be left alone. Modern psychology, however, has done a good deal to elucidate the question of instincts and we are in a much better position than was Gilbert White to distinguish between the spontaneous and the acquired.

No doubt, primitive hunting originated in the

plain necessity of providing food and protecting human life. But hunting is, in our day, for the most part a mere question of recreation—a pastime pure and simple. In his *Utopia* St. Thomas More says of the savage hunter that ‘he seeks nothing but pleasure of the woeful animal’s slaughter and murder,’ and perhaps we can leave it at that. Thus, in *Death by Moonlight*, which is a sort of apology for lion-killing, the author, Robert Henriques, frankly acknowledges that he is worried ‘by doubts about the ethics of killing things.’ He insists that the big-game hunter has a code, or ought to have one, and he consoles himself with the reflection that in certain places lions are just vermin. But, at the same time, he has no wilful delusions or pretences :

I hunt big game frankly and brutally because not otherwise can I find the same disappointments and reverses, the same excitements, the same antagonists and the same exhilarating rewards for skill and effort.

It was this aspect of the matter—the purely recreational aspect—which roused the indignation of St. Francis de Sales. He recognised that if animals have to be killed there is no help for it, but he thought it odd that Christians should seek their recreations in the torments and death-pangs of the brutes. It is not difficult to imagine what he would have thought of the practice of smearing the face of the initiate with the warm blood of the fox.

When Pope Pius V denounced the Spanish bull-fight, strong representations were made to have his prohibition repealed on the grounds that the

suppression of the sport would involve something in the nature of a dislocation of the national life. In the same way, an elaborate edifice of custom, fashion, enjoyment and social intercourse has been built up around hunting and it is no easy matter to challenge all this. When you take up almost any book about hunting—the memoirs, say, of some modern Nimrod—you are astonished to find that it is—as to about 95 per cent of the whole—a description of the joys that are hardly even accessory to the main business. Apparently, the mere killing of the fox does not and would not satisfy the average of the fox-hunting fraternity, just as the mere conveyance of food from the plate to the palate and from the palate to the stomach would not and does not satisfy the average gourmet. The fact is that hunting, like the passion of love in the East, has become more or less dramatised and turned into a sort of Grand Opera.

In her book of *Memories* Lady Fingall, whose husband was the Master of the Meath Hunt for many years, admits that she never really enjoyed hunting although she threw herself into it. It would be interesting to know of how many this could be said. In Society, things have a knack of being done and done and done simply because Society insists upon it. Taking one's place in Society means accepting its code, its customs and its outlook without question. But it would be rash to suppose that this acceptance is, in every case, begotten of anything in the nature of a personal conviction or that it involves a mental or moral acquiescence.

Woe to the farmer who shoots a fox ; and the

poacher is execrated as a monster for doing what the sportsman is supposed to be alone concerned to do. It is very doubtful if the Society lady thinks about the fox at all. Her mind is probably on her habit and the fine figure she is cutting and the thrill of being carried through the frosty air and over fences on the back of a horse. One wonders why the fox need be brought into the business. A mechanical something or other would only eliminate the odd 5 per cent of the pleasure. Indeed the fox must be astonished to survey the complicated and vast machinery which has to be set in motion in order that he may die before his appointed time. It is like calling out a regiment of horse-guards in order to exterminate one poor flea. The fox is not so much killed as a nuisance and as a pest, but, like the dying Gaul, is butchered to make a holiday.

What if my house be troubled with a rat
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned !

Naturally enough we point to this vast organisation and wonder how it can possibly be scrapped, very much after the fashion of the Colonel in *The Man who could work Miracles*, who, on being told that it was proposed to abolish war, very rightly asked : 'What are people like me going to do ?'

Some think that our genius for compromise will yet be invoked in this field. We may define compromise as a settlement, adopted as a means of superseding an undetermined controversy, the terms of which are such as to satisfy both sides. The hunters might agree to forgo their 5 per cent while the

R.S.P.C.A. might undertake to call off its inspectors ! Herbert Spencer regarded compromise as a peculiarly English characteristic ; and since we have grown quite accustomed to felt hats that have no felt in them, there is no reason why fox-less fox-hunting should not come along in due course. The electric hare is already a *fait accompli*, and in Ypres toy cats are going to be used in the revival of the ancient *Kattfeest*.

All the same, this is a very vexed question and it is not to be disposed of by simply quoting St. Francis de Sales. While we need not regard those who are working to abolish blood sports as anti-social freaks, at the same time we must not classify hunting people as monsters. Many would say that hunting is, at bottom, an irrational form of enjoyment, and they consider that a very good definition of a gentleman or a lady is 'one who does not inflict unnecessary pain.' Hunters themselves, however, regard their enjoyment as very rational, so that we come back again to the old difficulty of determining what is rational and what not. In this matter one person's meat is apt to be another's poison. 'What pleasure can you possibly get in drinking neat brandy?' the priest asked : but the old woman assured him that it was just like a torch-light procession going down her throat.

In certain localities the offices of the Christian religion are associated with blood sports. A kind of Hunter's Mass is celebrated during which musical items are supplied by the horns of the huntsmen. There is, besides, the widely advertised and just as widely criticised blessing of the hounds on St.

Hubert's feast. The beautiful story of St. Hubert's conversion has fascinated posterity; and many artists, notably Albert Dürer, have been inspired by it. St. Hubert is said to have been a nobleman employed (in the eighth century) at the court of Pepin of Heristal. While hunting in the Forest of Ardennes—a sport to which he was much addicted—he was converted to a devout life by the apparition of a cross which appeared between the antlers of a stag that he was in the act of shooting. Falling upon his knees he spared the life of the stag, renounced his pastime and became a hermit in the same forest.

By some unaccountable freak of human nature, it is this very man who has been chosen as the patron of Hunters, notwithstanding the plain and obvious lesson of his story. Yet it would be a mistake to identify this painful inconsistency with official Christianity. The Christian executive must be tolerant of many things, particularly where good intentions are mixed up with doubtful intentions. To invoke the blessing of St. Hubert upon the *dogs* is a very good intention. If the intention is to invoke the blessing of St. Hubert upon the *sport*, we can comfort ourselves with the reflection that St. Hubert is about the last Saint in heaven who is likely to respond to such an invocation.

The blessing of St. Barbara is invoked by gunners and artillery-men, and her image can be seen engraved upon Spanish field-pieces (at the Tower of London for example). But the blessing of St. Barbara is not invoked upon the business of war except indirectly. War has no patron saint. In the

Christian dispensation there is no personage corresponding to Mars ; and in the same way cruelty need not invoke nor try to shelter itself behind the Christian religion. In the words of St. John Chrysostom, ' clemency, humanity and pity towards the brute ' are what our religion inculcates. In the presence of all such deviations and abnormalities, we must rise above the particular incident and custom, however deeply rooted, to the authentic spirit of Christianity.

As far as the addiction of the clergy to them is concerned, blood sports have been under the censure of the Church from early times. She has always sought to inculcate among her clergy a horror of bloodshed ; and the early synods and councils imposed severe penalties upon all delinquents—for example, a year's penance for one in minor orders, two years for a deacon and three years for a priest. Undoubtedly these prohibitions are based upon principles of decorum and seemliness and so on ; but it is apparent from some of the decrees (for example, those of the Council in Trullo) that the Church thinks it derogatory to the clerical state that its members should be men of blood.

Coming to the question of the bullfight, it may be disturbing to find that many of those who witness a bullfight for the first time, have their aversion and hostility to Christianity intensified. .

The first thing I noticed was that I was feeling sorry, not for the bull in the arena but for the spectators in the seats—especially for myself, not as an individual, but as a human being. At that

moment, the brute, somehow, seemed far and away the superior of his torturers. When it was all over I had in me all the nervous wonder of a child who wakes up in a strange bed. I wondered, above all, what ailed me, what I had lost, what wrong had been done me. I felt a strange emptiness—the thing that Maurac noticed in his own case—as though my own Christian blood had been impoverished with all the blood that had been shed. As we left the amphitheatre the managers were, no doubt, busy calculating the profits. I was trying in vain to calculate the loss. A man at my elbow said : ‘ What sort of people are these ? They will have to pay for this. Of old, the elephants paved the way for the gladiators ! ’

This sort of testimony is distressing ; but it ought not to be forgotten that the perpetuation of this abhorrent blood sport has not been due to any lack of zeal on the part of the official Church. The condemnation of Pope St. Pius was issued in 1567.

It is decreed that if any of the bull-baiters should be killed he is to be denied Christian burial. All debts contracted through betting on the result are declared void and of no effect. The clergy may not attend under pain of excommunication.

In Spain itself, the bullfight was vigorously opposed by the Jesuit Mariana, the Father of Spanish History, and one of the greatest men that Spain has produced.

The condemnation of Pius V has been repeated again and again. The introduction of the bullfight

into France aroused a most uncompromising opposition on the part of the local Church authorities, notably of Monseigneur Plantier and Monseigneur Besson, two successive Bishops of Nîmes. The success of the opposition was so partial that Monseigneur Besson regretted that the times seemed to have passed when Bishops were listened to with attention and obeyed with docility.

That the official attitude of the Church to the bullfight and kindred blood sports is in no way changed, appears from the words used in 1920 by Cardinal Gasparri, the Secretary of State. 'If,' he wrote, 'in spite of the spirit of humanity which the new law encourages, human savagery fall away again in the promotion of bullfights, there is no doubt that the Church continues, as she has done in the past, loudly to condemn these shameful and bloody spectacles.'

At the moment Spain is entitled to and is receiving the sympathy of the civilised world. She has on her hands and is likely to have for some time, urgent and difficult problems whose solutions will demand time and patience. Inopportune and irresponsible criticism is calculated to alienate this sympathy and complicate these problems; but Christians are entitled to pray that the restoration of the bullfight may not be included in the programme of reconstruction which awaits a resurrected Spain.

Much has been written on the alleged callousness of the Spanish character 'which accepts the bullfight as a ritual, imposed the Inquisition and often prefers to kill rather than capture the losers in battle.' Leaving aside the question of the truth or

falsity of this charge, it would be a mistake to confuse hardness of heart and indifference to pain and bloodshed with a love of cruelty for its own sake. And it would be an even greater mistake to attribute these defects to the religion of the Spaniard. Religion has nothing to do with them. On the supposition that the charge has been proved, we must look elsewhere for the explanation. Dr. Havelock Ellis, in his book *The Soul of Spain*, thinks that he has discovered the explanation in the fact that 'the Spanish character is fundamentally not only African but primitive and—in the best sense of the word—savage.'

HUMANITARIANISM

SOME of those who are intent upon tidying up the universe have persuaded themselves that little or no help is to be looked for from Christians ; that they are full of ' queernesses ' and inhibitions, are fettered and tongue-tied and locked up in a pen made up of what they call their loyalty and orthodoxy.

Certainly Christians have to judge many of the questions of the day in and by the light of their faith. We may even allow that they live under the *shadow* of their faith. It is hampering to have a conscience and it is particularly hampering to have a conscience that is Christian. To that extent the coming of our Lord has made things more difficult for us.

The cutting down of our Christian faith, root and branch, leaves us with a certain liberty not unlike the *This Freedom* of the well-known novel. We are no longer bound by inward ties and loyalties. We can judge, or rather feel that we can judge, each thing by ourselves and by itself, on its own merits. We have no religious scruples. We have the reckless sort of liberty that weeds enjoy. Every loyalty involves an inhibition. It does not matter what we are trying to be loyal to, we shall be up against an incompatibility in some shape or form. These

Christian inhibitions of ours have to be reckoned with. They follow us everywhere. They enter into questions like Divorce and Euthanasia and Sterilisation. We cannot isolate these questions and we cannot altogether isolate the Animal Question.

Liberal humanitarians exercise their private judgment. When they find that the Gospel seems to conflict with their extreme views, they reject it in favour of—let us say—*The True Unknown Gospel of John* in which our Lord is represented as forbidding the killing of animals for food. When the Christian tradition gets in their way, they just step over it and forge ahead. Now that is what we cannot do. We cannot forge ahead. Some people say : ‘Sweep your inhibitions out of the way : get rid of your Christian complexes : kick over the traces and then you will be free to tackle the question.’ But we cannot do that. We are not prepared to do that and we have no desire to do it. To make the Animal Question an excuse for falling out with the Christian faith is a disloyalty of a particularly ironical sort, because, had it not been for this very faith, we should probably not bother our heads about the animals any more than do the Hindoos or the Arabs.

Our freedom to philosophise about the brutes is not, therefore, unlimited ; nor may we allow our humanitarian urges to go unchecked or to run riot. Human nature may wince, but we can afford to be thankful that we are bereft neither of guidance nor a restraining hand. To that extent we need not expect to shine with so bright a lustre as do those who refuse to allow anything in Christianity to interfere with their reforming impulses. It is not

that we cannot possibly do our duty to our religion and to the Animal Question at the same time. We can : but the Christian will not be able to show off quite so effectively as the free-lance—to exhibit so undiluted an enthusiasm. These inhibitions of ours do not at all argue any indifference or callousness in us. That is a mistake which our critics make. It is simply the question of a conflict between two duties. The conscience can be agitated and harassed not only by the conflict between right and wrong, but by the conflict between right and right. It is divided allegiance that shakes the soul ; an allegiance divided between two kinds of duty—divided by the difficulty of judging between them.

Even the most fanatical reformer does not and cannot go as far as he might like to go. If it is wrong to kill, it is wrong to wear leather shoes ; yet many extreme vegetarians wear leather shoes, borrowing the casuistry of certain Buddhists who are prepared to eat meat killed by a Mohammedan. If we have no dominion over animals we must leave them alone ; and yet even vegetarians do not leave them alone. They eat eggs and milk ; and if we have no dominion over animals that is theft. Again, if animals have the same rights as humans we have no right to domesticate them. We ought to set them free. And we have no right to put them to sleep. We must let them die a natural death as do the Buddhists. We shall then have amongst ourselves the harrowing sights that can be seen in the East—animals lying on dust-heaps and taking days to die.

We all have our inhibitions really ; some more,

some less : but we have them. We cannot afford to sneer at the inhibitions of other people. That simply means that we prefer our own set of inhibitions to those of others—that is all. There is really no escape from these inhibitions and tensions. They are in the nature of things. The very atheist has them. One of his biggest trials arises from the fact that he often wants to thank God and yet he is not allowed to. The man who does not believe in morality is inhibited from the practice of virtue ; and it is extraordinary how attractive virtue can become as soon as we are forbidden to practise it !

And, apart from this, we may not give our undivided attention to the matter of Animal Welfare and treat it as though it were the only or the most pressing problem of the day. Some humanitarians are able to dedicate themselves, whole and entire, to the animals—are able to devote the whole of their spare time and money to them. That we cannot do. We are faced with other duties, other claims more urgent—Poverty, Child Welfare and so on. The Animal Question can claim and does claim some of our humanitarian attention but not the whole of it. To that extent we are at a disadvantage in the sense that we cannot hope to make so good a show as those enthusiasts who leave their whole fortune to the Dogs' Home. It is a matter of putting first things first.

The Christian humanitarian is keen enough on achieving the end, but he must exercise discretion in the matter of the means and the method. He will be mainly intent on working from within to the outward and external. The good life, the improved

state of affairs, the checking of what St. Augustine calls 'the torrent of human custom' is not to be attained by mere compulsion and stone-throwing and hunger-striking. Things do get changed that way ; but the lasting revolution is effected by means of a change of heart ; and this change of heart is, in its turn, effected by calm and patient spiritual education. From the Christian point of view, the contest which the Ideal wages against the Real must be conducted with prudence and with charity. It is true that in our unreasoning world it is the extremist who usually gets things done. For example, it was the violence of the extreme suffragette that carried the Women's Suffrage movement to success ; in fact, Mrs. Pankhurst insisted that only a campaign of violence could achieve the end she had in view. No doubt she was right ; but this rather throws into the shade those who are equally zealous but yet precluded from resorts to violence. In the history of progress the rebel has played a part not much inferior to the politician and statesman : and this does seem to reflect upon the politician and the statesman.

In presence of the violence and extravagance which accompany progressive movements, Christians are faced with a very awkward dilemma. Invective seems to be the stock-in-trade of some reformers. Maxim Gorki's name or pseudonym means 'extreme bitterness' ; and some humanitarians seem to think that unless you are prepared to 'maxim-gorkiise' yourself, you are 'no good.'

Zealous people sometimes ask why we do not join in and give them a hand ; and they allude to the

peevishness of orthodox Christians, to their disgruntled, jealous and 'sour grapes' mentality. Obviously the mentality of Christians does not always succeed in coming up to the mark. We may be a little too prone to question the good faith of others, too reluctant to admit that good works can develop outside the fold, too prone to defend every mortal thing that large numbers of Christians happen to be doing. We have to beware of a certain vague and casual acquiescence in current fashions of thought and of conduct : and we have to recognise that ' some good and some truth are immanent in the new temporal forms which are emerging from the obscure chrysalis of history, and that they manifest in some way the Will of God which is absent from nothing that exists.' It would certainly be a mistake did we persuade ourselves that we possess a monopoly of intelligence. As Christopher Dawson says : ' Our advantage lies not in the excellence of our brains but in the strength of our principles.'

But mere peevishness does not account for the whole of this attitude. Allowance is seldom made for the shyness of Christians who are brought into contact with those who do not share their beliefs. We are not altogether in our element among them any more than they are among us. It is not so much the ideas or principles as the tone, the idiom, the style. It is the sort of embarrassment you feel in talking French when you are not at all sure of your accent.

Again, there is in the average Christian a certain hyper-sensitiveness which results in a vague, suspicious resentfulness of outside influence and inter-

ference. Certain predecessors of ours in the early Church refused to use the baths after the Arians or Donatists had been in them. They did not exactly prefer to go dirty, because they ran the stale water off and then washed themselves in the fresh : but there is a type of Christian that prefers to go untidy rather than submit to being tidied up by outsiders. We do not care to drop our prejudices or ignorances at the bidding of any modern Arian or Donatist. When an undenominational humanitarian begins to preach at us, an instinct in us throws us upon the defensive and we are not always very particular as to the kind of weapon we use. We are rather loath to believe that such people can possibly know what they are talking about ; and so when they talk against cruelty we may be tempted to say : ‘ As a matter of fact, there is no such thing.’

None of this is really serious. It is just the old instinct that kept the early Christian out of the heretical bath-water. We are inclined to be suspicious of outside movements, that is all. There is, for example, a prevalent belief that modern psychology is quite incompatible with the Christian ethos. This is not a fact ; and it is safe to say that there is no national enterprise directed to the welfare of animals that is incompatible with the Christian ethos. There is a frightful amount of error and dangerous error mixed up with modern psychology—especially popular psychology. The Christian is, therefore, tempted to reject the whole business. There is also a certain amount of error and exaggeration mixed up with Animal Welfare movements and again the Christian is tempted to reject the whole

business. There is a genuine fear of appearing to play into the hands of extremists. This suspicion or caution does explain why Christians sometimes *appear* to be blocking the road of progress. Nowadays, unfortunately, there is no alternative between the Right Wing and the Left Wing. This makes it difficult for those who are anxious to avoid extremes and it also puts them in a false position.

If we seem to stand aloof from certain enterprises it is not always because we are indifferent to the needs of the times or wish to maintain the *status quo* in everything. It may be because, under all the circumstances, abstention is a painful necessity. We do not serve the cause of truth by pretending that fundamental errors are only side issues or negligible quantities. The urge behind a good deal of modern humanitarianism is little better than an idolatrous urge. God is dethroned in favour of men and even beasts. Religion is considered to be concerned solely or primarily with human improvement and to have only one commandment: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' There is about some humanitarians a sort of bitter zeal as though they were angry with God for not existing and lending a hand with the tidying up of the world.

But although we Christians may not discard our hesitations and scruples of conscience, it will not do for us to segregate ourselves completely from the improving movements that have come to life around us. We must try to see that modern humanitarianism has a strong side. Its strength lies in its unselfishness, its passionate desire to alleviate the sufferings of men and of brutes. Its weakness lies in its trying to do

this without the inspiration and support of religion. But its weakness does *not* lie in its ideals, as critics are inclined to suppose. Its weakness and error lie in its *isolation*. Therefore, it is our duty to cherish it where possible and so try to safeguard it and bring it back to its true source which it has denied. This humanitarianism has left home like the Prodigal Son and has wandered into a strange country : but it is still the son of its father, and we who love the father ought to be sympathetic and patient with the son. We may thus be able to coax him home again. Add to this the plain fact that the parental image is by no means altogether obliterated in the case of this prodigal son. Surely it is our Christian duty to go through the world turning its water into wine. We must draw near to these movements—unless they are frankly impossible to accept—and do what we can to remove the ugly impression that is abroad, that in all that relates to the human we are critics and obstructionists and nothing else, that we have nothing to contribute except denunciations. If we stand utterly aloof how are they going to get the benefit of our direction ?

Christians cannot afford to ignore the generous urges that manifest themselves in the modern world. Rather must they endeavour, by means of sympathy and co-operation, to bring them into contact with Christian truth. Anything in the nature of a ‘splendid isolation’ means a failure to realise the mission and duty that we have to the temporal. Christianity stands essentially for a universal order in which every good and every truth of the natural or the social order can find a place.

This is a delicate problem certainly, but it ought not to be insoluble. Our isolation from the social movement has been unfortunate. In our day there is a sort of passion for the better shaping of human life, and we are not forbidden to share that passion. Of course, Animal Welfare ranks in the minds of some above the cardinal virtues. But deplorable though this may be, we may be thankful that these people have to some extent emancipated themselves from the philosophy of sheer selfishness and callousness. It is regrettable that many modern devotees of St. Francis are interested solely in the humanitarian side of his character : but that is better than no interest at all. The Wolf of Gubbio has led some to ponder his life who otherwise might never have done so.

Humanitarianism is the only thing in the shape of an outline of religion that some people have. Perhaps we may rejoice to think that they have at least that. As an offset to sheer materialism any super-material urge or intuition ought to be welcomed. It is a grain of comfort to find the materialised modern in contact with some vaguely spiritual and ethical reality. If we attack this type of humanitarianism, we run the risk of depriving it of the straw that is keeping it afloat. Let us allow it to keep its straw and hope that it may turn into a plank and the plank into a keel—the keel of a certain Barque which figures in Catholic symbolism. Humanitarianism may yet lead the world back to God. It is not altogether an unlikely or uncongenial path as far as God is concerned. But we shall not accelerate this type of man's return to religion by

denouncing his zeal in the name of religion. Our delicate yet holy task must be to conserve each good tendency in our times and not to alienate it. Animal Welfare may be some people's only bit of moral enthusiasm. Let us respect it as a sort of Widow's Mite.

In short, we have a paramount duty to our environment, and we ought to be able to influence it and leaven it as the early Christians did whose environment was far less promising than ours. The outlook of the Christian is comprehensive enough to be able to examine other people's points of view ; and with regard to welfare movements in particular, we need not allow what alienates us to interfere with what unites us. We ought to pool our resources in the interests of any and every really good cause.

Even the most sensitive Christian need not hesitate to extract from contemporary tendencies whatever wholesome ideas they have to offer, even though the adoption of these may involve a reshuffling of our own preconceptions and prejudices. Speaking to Catholics the Abbé Huvelin said : ' Let us do what we can to co-operate with others, without adopting an air of distrust, without penalising them because they have not the same outlook as ourselves.'

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